

~ A ~
HISTORY
~ OF THE ~
SCOTTISH
PEOPLE.



4^o Brit. 204^u (2)

4^o Brit. 204^u-(2)



GORDON BROWNE.

BEFORE THE MURDER OF JAMES I. AT PERTH,
CATHERINE DOUGLAS BARS THE DOOR WITH HER ARM, TO PREVENT THE ENTRANCE
OF THE CONSPIRATORS. (A.D. 1437.)

A HISTORY
OF THE
SCOTTISH PEOPLE
FROM THE EARLIEST TIMES

BY THE
REV. THOMAS THOMSON.

THE ASSASSINATION OF JAMES I. OF SCOTLAND
AT PERTH.

At the Christmastide of A.D. 1437, James I. of Scotland proceeded to Perth on one of his justiciary progresses. When he was about to cross the Forth a Highland woman appeared suddenly before him and cried: "My lord the king, if you pass this water you shall never return alive." Nevertheless he proceeded to Perth and took residence in the Monastery of the Black Friars. Just when the King had retired for the night, a band of conspirators, headed by Sir Robert Graham, entered the building. There was a sudden uproar, a glare of torches, a tramp of armed men. The ladies of the Queen's bed-chamber rushed to fasten the door that led to the great hall, but they found that the lock had been rendered useless. *On the instant Catherine Douglas thrust her arm into the staple to hold the conspirators at bay, but it was snapped in two when the door was burst violently open.* Meanwhile the King had escaped to a chamber underground, where he was ultimately discovered and slain.

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2
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REV. THOMAS THOMSON,
EDITOR OF "THE COMPREHENSIVE HISTORY OF ENGLAND;" ETC.

WITH
A CONTINUATION TO THE JUBILEE YEAR OF HER MAJESTY
QUEEN VICTORIA (1887), AND AN

INTRODUCTION

GIVING AN ACCOUNT OF THE COUNTRY AND ITS INHABITANTS IN THE
PERIOD PRECEDING THE INVASION OF THE ROMANS.

BY
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DIVISIONAL-VOLUME II.

FROM DEATH OF ROBERT BRUCE, 1329, TILL DEATH OF JAMES V., 1542.



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PERIOD V.

FROM THE DEATH OF ROBERT BRUCE TO THE ACCESSION OF JAMES I. (A.D. 1329 TO A.D. 1424).

CHAPTER I.

FROM THE REGENCY OF RANDOLPH TO EDWARD'S RECALL TO ENGLAND (1329-1336).

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ON the death of Robert Bruce Thomas Randolph, Earl of Moray, became regent of Scotland. His first proceedings were those of a strict and active justiciary, and in this capacity one of his awards was characterized by a boldness unwonted in the rulers of the period. A man who had murdered a priest had repaired to the papal court, and having done penance, whatever it might be, obtained absolution. Confiding in his pardon he returned to Scotland, but was apprehended and brought before the regent, who was holding a justice-court at Inverness. On the trial the culprit pleaded the papal absolution as a complete answer to every legal demand: but the reply of Randolph was sharp and brief. "You have been absolved," he said, "from the sin of the deed, but not from its civil consequences;" and the murderer was forthwith sentenced and executed. The other acts of Randolph, in quelling the disorders of the country and restoring peace and security, were of the same stern character; but they were conformable to the age and the rude state of Scottish society. He ordained that travellers, on alighting at a hostelry, should only fasten the horse's bridle to the door; and should the bridle be stolen the sheriff of the district was to pay the price of it. If the horse itself should be stolen, we may suppose, from this simple principle of

remuneration, that the mulct was proportionably raised. The ploughman also might leave his share and plough-harness beside, or attached to, the utensil, for if they were stolen the sheriff had to make good the loss by the payment of two shillings to the loser. This severe administration of justice and strict order for the safety of property reminds us of the days of Malachi in Ireland or Alfred in England. His own justiciary progresses over the kingdom, in which he was indefatigable, were enough to rouse the activity of inferior magistrates, while his merciless impartiality might well make them quake for their own safety if they should be found remiss. On one occasion his coroner or deputy, who had been sent before him in one of his progresses, arrested fifty evil-doers and garnished the town wall with their heads, so that when Randolph arrived he found these gory tokens stuck up, and "grynnand rycht wgly," and the work on which he had set out well nigh completed—"off that sycht he wes rycht blyth." Wyntoun, who records these doings with delight, exclaims—

"Wes nevyr nane in justyce lyk
Till this Erle in oure kynryk:
He sparyd nowthyre for luive na awe,
As caus wes to do the lawe."¹

¹ *Scotichron.* lib. xviii. c. 13; Wyntoun, b. viii.

Having brought the country into settled order with an iron hand Randolph now proceeded to the coronation of his sovereign and cousin, David II., and he and his queen Joanna were solemnly crowned at Scone on the 24th of November, 1331. The sacred ceremony of anointing, which the church had withheld from the father, was on this occasion extended to his son, for by a bull from John XXII. addressed to Robert Bruce, the Bishop of St. Andrews, and failing him the Bishop of Glasgow, was commissioned to pour the holy oil upon his successor. The youthful sovereign, now only eight years old, after receiving knighthood from Randolph, bestowed that honour on Thomas, the regent's eldest son, and several others of the nobility.¹

Well, indeed, might the Earl of Moray be anxious to compose the disorders of the kingdom, and establish the regular succession in the throne. For even already those clouds were gathering which threatened a fresh storm and a renewed struggle for national liberty. Edward III., the high-spirited but unfortunate hero of the short campaign on the Wear, had there ended as well as commenced the rashness and errors of his public career. From that period he was never to be young, and he had already entered upon that course in which he was to prove himself as unscrupulous and ambitious a politician, and a still more fortunate conqueror, than his grandfather Edward I. It was natural that he should look to the recovery of his sovereignty over Scotland as an inheritance of which he had been defrauded during his minority, and this feeling must have been sharpened by the recollection of how successfully he had been foiled in his first attempt by him who was now the Scottish regent. The achievement of such a conquest, which revenge and ambition prompted, he must also have felt had been greatly facilitated by the deaths of Bruce and Douglas, leaving none of the great Scottish leaders to oppose him but Randolph himself, now becoming an old man whose career must soon be ended. But the example of his grandfather's over-eagerness had taught him caution, and he advanced towards his object with those slow and silent steps that give the surest promise of success. His first proceeding was to invite Edward, the son and heir of the unfortunate John Baliol, to England. He then demanded that, in fulfilment of the treaty of Northampton, those English lords who had been dispossessed of their Scottish estates and lordships should be replaced in their possessions. These nobles were Thomas Lord Wake, Henry Percy, and Henry

Beaumont, of whose lands in Scotland Bruce had taken possession during the war, but had agreed to restore them by one of the terms of the late treaty. This restitution was granted in the case of Percy, but in that of Wake and Beaumont Randolph delayed. And there were causes that justified this delay. Beaumont, in right of his wife, claimed the earldom of Buchan, by which he would have become one of the most powerful of the Scottish nobility; while Wake demanded the lordship of Liddel, through which he would have held the key of the western marches. While they would thus have the means to facilitate an English invasion into Scotland, their inclination towards such a measure could scarcely be doubted, for both of these lords had loudly protested against the peace of Northampton and were eager for a renewal of the war.² Randolph therefore paused in the work of restitution although it was urged by the repeated demands of Edward III.; and the two lords, becoming hopeless of a voluntary concession, resolved to extort it by force. For this purpose they formed an alliance with Edward Baliol, whose restoration to the royal rights of his father formed the pretext of their invasion; and they were speedily joined by all those English barons who, like themselves, had been dispossessed of their Scottish lordships and were eager to recover them. They soon mustered their military retainers, avowed their purpose of placing Edward Baliol upon the throne of Scotland, and were ready to commence their march across the Border. But the consent of Edward III., which was necessary for the inroad, was refused. His measures had thus far ripened the design, and he had interposed no check to those military preparations by which the war was to be renewed. He now professed a sacred regard for the treaty of Northampton, which would not permit an inroad of such open and warlike character; but he could not hinder them from privately embarking their small force at an English port and entering Scotland by sea. This the invaders well understood, and accordingly they set sail uninterrupted from Ravenspur, near the mouth of the Humber, while the English king was commanding his subjects by proclamation to respect the peace of Northampton.³ Thus Edward III., if the expedition failed, could disown it as a prohibited outbreak. But if, in the strange chances of such a period, it should change the dynasty or effect the conquest of Scotland, the advantages of a war that had cost him nothing would be his own.

¹ *Scotichron.* l. xiii. c. 21; Wyntoun, b. viii.

² *Fœd. Ang.* A.D. 1331-2.

³ Leland; Knighton; Walsingham.

The number as well as the claims of those nobles who had entered Scotland to make good their pretensions at the sword-point were sufficiently formidable. Besides the two who have been already mentioned, was Gilbert de Umfraville, whose father had been deprived of the earldom of Angus and lordship of Dunipace; David de Strathbogie, who claimed through his mother the earldom of Athole; Richard Talbot, who in right of his wife demanded half of the estates that had belonged to Comyn of Badenoch; and Henry de Ferrers, who laid claim to lands in Galloway which had descended to his family through De Quincy, Earl of Winchester.¹ The rest were so numerous that had all their claims been fulfilled half the property of Scotland must have changed owners and an English aristocracy been imposed upon its national councils. But the whole force which they embarked for the achievement scarcely numbered three thousand soldiers. So desperate an adventure confirms the suspicion that treachery had revived in Scotland since the death of Bruce, and that they were well assured of finding allies and supporters at their landing. Aware of the designed invasion, Randolph had assembled his forces and marched to Colbrands-path to meet the enemy at their first entrance; but on learning that they were coming by sea he retraced his steps and proceeded northwards, to be ready at whatever point they might land. It was in the midst of all this activity and careful preparation that he sickened and expired at Musselburgh, near Edinburgh. His death, so sudden and so opportune for the invaders, gave strength to the report that he had been taken off by poison, and this report has been handed down by our earliest historians.² But if it be true that in his last days he was afflicted with the stone, a disease which the rude science of the age had not learned to cure, this may sufficiently account for his sudden death without aspersing those gallant enemies who were benefited by his death.

Thus Bruce, Douglas, and finally Randolph had passed away, the last at a period that his political wisdom and military skill were most needed; and when the Scottish parliament was assembled on the 2d August, 1332, to appoint his successor in the regency, they must have felt themselves perplexed as well as limited in their choice. For Bruce's grandson, the Steward, was still a minor; the surviving heroes of the former war were scarcely of rank and influence sufficient for such an office, and among the higher nobility there were many connected either by relationship or political alliance with

the invaders. But the greatness of the difficulty seems to have bereft them of prudence, and their election was the worst that could have been made; for it fell upon Donald, Earl of Mar, most of whose life had been spent in England, first as a prisoner, and afterwards as a voluntary sojourner, and who had enjoyed little or no opportunity of acquiring experience either in war or government. But he was the late king's nephew, and this perhaps the parliament thought was qualification enough. Only four days afterwards Baliol landed near Kinghorn on the Firth of Forth. One such onset as that of Bishop Sinclair might have driven the invaders into the sea and swamped the whole adventure in an instant; but Edward Baliol, or rather those who acted under his name, were allowed to effect their landing upon that broken coast without interruption. It was only when they had obtained an effectual footing and drawn up in battle order that Sir Alexander Seton, with a small and hastily-arrayed force, endeavoured to arrest their march; but he was slain in the unsupported attempt and his followers were cut to pieces.³ The English proceeded to Dunfermline, where they took possession of a magazine of arms and provisions; and being now confident of success, they marched northward to Forteviot, where they encamped with the river Earn in front, after having sent off their fleet with orders to sail round the coast and anchor in the mouth of the Tay. Here their doom was apparently certain, for the Earl of Mar drew up against them on Dupplin Moor, on the opposite side of the Earn, with an army of 30,000 Scots, while another almost equally numerous, commanded by the Earl of March, had advanced to Auchterarder, only eight miles distant from Forteviot.⁴ Nothing, indeed, could be more perilous than the condition of this handful of invaders, deprived of their shipping and inclosed between two such armies; but they knew that there was treason in the Scottish camp, and they resolved to become the assailants. They crossed the Earn at midnight, being directed by a stake planted in the ford of the river by Andrew Murray of Tullibardine, a traitor serving under the banner of March, and advanced up the hill to the army of the regent, where no sentinels had been placed, and where the soldiers themselves were either drunken with riotous mirth or buried in the sleep of their debauch. Their first onset was terrible upon a crowd of newly-awakened and naked soldiers, and would have been instantly successful but for the generous valour of Thomas, Earl

¹ Dugdale. ² Barbour; Wyntoun; Fordun; Boece.
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³ *Scotichron.* l. xiii. c. 22; Wyntoun, b. viii.

⁴ Hemingford; Knighton; Fordun.

of Moray, son of the late regent, Murdoch, Earl of Monteith, Alexander Fraser, and Robert Bruce, a natural son of King Robert, who at the head of 300 men desperately threw themselves across the enemy's path and kept them for a while in check. The Scots had thus time to form; but, despising the small number of their assailants, they rushed down to battle without orders, and were soon a confused multitude, where horse and foot and every rank and class were mixed in wild confusion and trampling down each other, while the vanward was crushed and smothered beneath the eager pressure and weight of the rear. Thus the battle, or rather uproar, which had commenced with the earliest twilight, lasted for several hours, and the English had little to do except to stand firm in their ranks and slaughter the Scots at pleasure. The whole Scottish army was slain, captured, or scattered, while the band by whom they had thus been routed could scarcely believe their own good fortune and regarded it as a miracle. It was a fearful omen to the vanquished that the tide had suddenly turned and the order of events been reversed, for never had they sustained a defeat so shameful as that of Dupplin Moor. About 13,000 of their number are supposed to have fallen on this occasion, of whom many showed by their unwounded bodies that they had been smothered in their armour or trampled to death by their own comrades in the tumult. Among the slain were the regent himself, who thus paid the forfeit of his incapacity; the young Earl of Moray, who on this occasion showed himself worthy of his gallant father; Murdoch, Earl of Monteith; Alexander Fraser, chamberlain of Scotland and brother-in-law of the late king; Robert Bruce, and Robert, Earl of Carrick, the natural son of Edward Bruce, King of Ireland. Thus the leaders of the brave band who offered the first resistance and whose resistance, if properly seconded, would soon have turned the doom of that dark morning, were not fated to survive and witness their country's shame. The whole English loss was summed up in two knights, thirty-three squires, and a small number of common soldiers.¹

Immediately after his victory Baliol took possession of Perth, which he fortified by clearing the ditch and inclosing the town with palisades. There was need of this hasty precaution, for the army of March, ten times more numerous than his own, might be hourly expected. The first notice which the earl received of the disaster of Dupplin was from a soldier mortally wounded in the conflict, who met him on the

way, pointed to his wounds in token of the defeat, and expired. March advanced to the field of battle, and found the tale confirmed by heaps of corpses. Resolving to assail the enemy within their fortifications at Perth, he ordered his soldiers, when they reached Lammerkin Wood, to provide themselves with faggots and branches for filling up the ditch in attacking the town, and hurried on to the assault; but on reaching the heights by which the town was overlooked he unexpectedly ordered a halt. It was evident, from his ignorance of the fight going on at Dupplin until it was finished, that he was a careless and most incompetent leader; and the sudden pause which he now made, when his soldiers were ready for battle and impatient for revenge, gives countenance to the suspicion that his inclinations leaned to the side of Baliol. This seems to have been the assured belief of Henry de Beaumont, the chief English commander; for on witnessing the halt of the Scottish army he cried to his followers, "Take courage and fear not, for we have friends among them." The intended assault upon Perth, which had every prospect of success, was changed by the Earl of March into a blockade that was to be maintained both by land and sea, and for this purpose Crab, the Flemish engineer who had so greatly distinguished himself in the defence of Berwick, and who was still in the Scottish service, was ordered to cruise in the Tay and intercept every ship from England. But the small squadron of the Fleming was so effectually resisted by an English fleet that he was compelled to take to flight. The purposed blockade being thus broken up, the Earl of March retreated, disbanded his army, and soon after made submission to Baliol. No other Scottish force being in the field, Edward Baliol triumphantly repaired to Scone, and on the 24th of September (1332) was crowned King of Scotland without a voice being raised to gainsay his claim.² This conquest of a kingdom, achieved by a handful that scarcely seemed enough for a marauding inroad, and achieved in three short weeks and after a single victory, has scarcely a parallel in history, or even in chivalrous romance. But we must take into account the unhappy combination of circumstances that made this conquest so cheap and so easy. The Earls of Mar and March were evidently the kind of leaders that in every age have proved the best stepping-stones to the progress of invasion and conquest. Of the Scottish nobility there was still a large party that adhered to the cause of the Baliol family, but who dared not

¹ *Scotichron.* lib. xiii. c. 22, *et sequen.*; Wyntoun, b. viii. c. 26; Knighton; Walsingham.

² Wyntoun; *Scotichron.*; *Scala Chron.*; Hemingford; Knighton.

avow themselves during the reign of the late king. Not a few were still discontented with the proceedings of the Black Parliament, and waited for an opportunity of revenge. Some feared the power of the English king, which was enlisted on Baliol's side; and others may have felt that their possessions could be held more securely under a sovereign of full age and so powerfully supported than under a minor whose claims were still the subject of question. It was a great national feud between the Bruces and the Baliols, in which the imbecility, selfishness, and treachery of the one party had given a sudden ascendancy to the other. Of the readiness of the Scottish nobility to transfer their allegiance a proof was given at the coronation of the new king. The principal persons who presided at the ceremony were Duncan, Earl of Fife, whose gallant son, Sir Alexander Seton, had been slain in opposing Baliol's landing, and William Sinclair, prelate of Dunkeld, who for his exploit at Donibristle had been honoured by Bruce with the title of the King's Bishop.

Although the Scottish spirit was thus quelled, it was only by a momentary paralysis; the adherents of the family of Bruce and national liberty quickly recovered from the blow. Their first care was for the safety of David II. and his youthful bride, whom they sent to the court of France, where they were hospitably received under the protection of Philip VI.; and their first attempt was for the recovery of Perth, which Baliol had intrusted to the keeping of the Earl of Fife. But the faithless earl was once more untrue, if we may believe an old English historian, for he delivered up the town to Sir James and Sir Simon Fraser, and Sir Robert Keith, its assailants, who razed its fortifications. Among the prisoners taken on this occasion was Andrew Murray of Tullibardine, who had planted a stake in the river Earn for the guidance of the English in crossing the river at midnight, and he was now properly rewarded by being tried and executed as a traitor. This success at Perth encouraged the insurgents to elect to the regency of Scotland Sir Andrew Moray of Bothwell, who had held that office in his youth conjunctly with Wallace, and who, since the death of Bruce, whose sister Christina he had married, was accounted the best and bravest of his surviving followers.¹

This unexpected reaction of the Scots alarmed two interested parties. The one was Edward III., who had hitherto held aloof from pretended respect to the treaty of Northampton, while he secretly favoured the invasion of

Baliol and the cause of the dispossessed lords, and who only waited for their success that he might enter and reap the fruits. The other was Edward Baliol himself, who felt that without the open aid of England he could not maintain the advantage which English swords had won for him. At the first tidings of the revolt the King of England advanced to the Borders under the pretext of watching over the safety of his own kingdom; and thither also Baliol repaired to crave his aid and adjust the terms of its purchase. From the daring nature of the enterprise, and the skill and valour with which the crown of Scotland was so quickly won, its new wearer has by some been invested with the attributes of a hero. But his abject concessions to Edward III. at Roxburgh showed that he had even less courage and kingly spirit than his father; and that he had only been the puppet of Henry de Beaumont and the English lords, who were the real heroes of the expedition. He was now more willing to be a "toom tabard" than even his father had been in his acknowledgment of Edward III. as his feudal superior and master; and that the acknowledgment might be no empty or doubtful homage he agreed to put him in possession of the town, castle, and territory of Berwick, and of other lands on the marches that were worth two thousand a year. He offered to marry the Princess Joanna, whom he affected to consider as only betrothed to David II.; to add £500 of land-rent to her original jointure, and to underlie a penalty of £10,000 for her jointure, or in her behoof in the case of non-fulfilment. As for David himself, he offered to provide for his maintenance as the King of England should advise—a burden which was not likely under such circumstances to be of long continuance. He also bound himself as a faithful and obedient liegeman to serve Edward III. in all his wars with two hundred men-at-arms at his own charges, and to bind his successors to perform the like service with a hundred men-at-arms. But worst of all, should he or his successors fail to appear in the field they became liable to the penalty of £200,000 to be paid to the King of England, the latter in the meantime to be allowed to hold possession of the rest of Scotland and its islands until the debt was discharged—a consummation that must have been classed among the impossibilities of the fourteenth century. Thus Baliol sealed the bondage of himself, his descendants, and his kingdom without compunction or demur, that he might enjoy at least the title and the show of royalty. On the other hand, the King of England, who now dropped the mask, and claimed the merit of the conquest of Scotland as having

¹ *Scotichron.*; Wyntoun.

been achieved by his subjects and with his permission, engaged to maintain Edward Baliol upon its throne against all who might oppose him.¹

Thus fortified, as he thought, against every opponent, the recreant son of the degraded John of Scotland returned from the Border and was lulled into confidence by the readiness with which the lords of the Baliol and Comyn families and all who despaired of their country, or were willing, like himself, to barter liberty for safety, acknowledged him for their king. But while he was thus resting in full security at Annan, John Randolph, second son of the late regent, who had become Earl of Moray by the death of his elder brother; Archibald Douglas, the youngest brother of the good Lord James; and Sir Simon Frazer, had assembled a body of horsemen, and were hovering in his neighbourhood. Learning the security of Baliol's encampment, they made a sudden dash upon it in a dark December night, struck down or put to flight those whom their onset wakened, and in a few minutes converted the whole royal camp into a terror-stricken mob where each was afraid of his fellow. Henry Baliol, the brother of Edward, who made a brave resistance, was slain, and with him fell Walter Comyn, Sir John Mowbray, Sir Richard Kirby, and other persons of distinction. Among the prisoners was Alexander, Earl of Carrick, a natural son of Edward Bruce, but who had forsaken the cause of his family for that of their enemy, and who would have been executed as a traitor but for the generous interposition of his captor the young Earl of Moray. Edward Baliol himself, almost stark naked, threw himself upon an unsaddled and unbridled horse, and in this unkingly trim was carried out of danger, and borne in full flight towards England, which he contrived to reach in safety.² Thus was his crown as quickly lost as it had been won, and in either case by a night surprise in which the victors were greatly inferior in numbers to the vanquished, for his assailants in this camisade were only a thousand hastily collected horsemen. The period of his royalty also was very brief, as only four months and four days had elapsed between his victory at Dupplin Moor and his solitary flight into England.

As that country had now become the shelter of Baliol and his accomplices the Scots renewed their old inroads across the Border; upon which Edward III., notwithstanding his late approval of Baliol's invasion, complained that they had violated the treaty of Northampton, and made

ready to avail himself of the pretext. In the meantime the first Scottish incursions into England were attended with disastrous results. In consequence of an inroad of Archibald Douglas by the western marches, in which he wasted Gilsland and the country round for thirty miles, Sir Anthony Lucy of Cockermouth made a counter-inroad into Scotland at the head of 800 followers. On his return Sir Anthony was met and encountered by Sir William Douglas of Liddesdale, natural son of the good Lord James, a knight so renowned in arms that he afterwards obtained the high title of the "Flower of Chivalry." But on this early occasion his good fortune failed him, for the best portion of his band was killed or captured, and himself taken prisoner. So high already was the reputation of the Knight of Liddesdale, that King Edward commanded him to be put in irons, and in this condition he was kept prisoner for two years. About the same time an inroad of Baliol into Scotland led to a similar disaster. While he was at Roxburgh waiting for reinforcements from England he was attacked by Sir Andrew Moray, the regent; but in a fierce skirmish that ensued on the bridge of Roxburgh, Ralph Golding, a gallant esquire of Moray, who was first in the assault, was thrown to the ground and taken prisoner. His master rushed to the rescue, but being ill seconded by his followers, was also borne down. Even then, scorning to surrender to meaner men, he would only render himself to the King of England, and for this purpose he was taken to Edward himself, who was at Durham. In this manner the two best soldiers of Scotland, the Knight of Liddesdale and Sir Andrew Moray of Bothwell, fell into the hands of the enemy when their services were most needed. The election of a new regent was necessary, and the appointment fell upon Archibald Douglas, youngest brother of Sir James, and successor to the leadership of that distinguished family which every event was fast ripening into full maturity.³

In consequence of these defeats and captures Edward could now invade Scotland with the best prospect of success. He accordingly ordered an army to assemble at Newcastle-on-Tyne, and desired public prayers for the preservation of himself, his troops, and his kingdom to be offered up in the churches. He also besought the Earl of Flanders to prohibit his subjects from aiding the Scots, whom he stigmatized as rebels; and to an appeal of the King of France in behalf of Scotland he curtly answered by laying the whole blame of the war on the Scots themselves, whom he meant to chastise accord-

¹ Rymer's *Fœdera*, vol. iv. p. 536-7-8-9.

² Wyntoun; *Scotichron.*

³ *Scotichron.*; Walsingham.

ing to his own pleasure. As his first attempt would be upon Berwick, the chief gate and entrance to Scotland, the Scots, aware of this, had intrusted to the Earl of March the command of the castle and to Sir Alexander Seton the command of the town. The first operations of the siege of Berwick, which was commenced by Edward in May (1333), were by sea; and here the Scots were so successful in their resistance that a considerable part of the English fleet was burned. But by land the town was closely blockaded, and being poorly fortified and scantily provisioned it was evident that its fate could not be far distant. Every exertion was made by the Scots for its relief, and in the meantime the besieged agreed to surrender by a certain day unless succours could previously be thrown into the town, for which they gave hostages to the English king, among whom was a son of Seton, the governor.¹ The appointed day was near when the people of Berwick were gladdened by the sight of a Scottish army commanded by the regent advancing to raise the blockade. The English were too well entrenched to be tempted out to battle, and the only relief that could be given was by throwing a party of soldiers into the town under the command of Sir William Keith, who was appointed one of the new governors of Berwick. Finding that he could not provoke the besiegers into the field, Douglas resolved, as Bruce had done, to draw the English army from Berwick to the defence of their own country, and for this purpose he marched into Northumberland, laid siege to Bamborough Castle, in which the queen of Edward III. was residing, and wasted the surrounding district. But the English king was as little to be tempted from his advantageous position as had been Randolph and Douglas, his preceptors in war, from their encampment on the banks of the Wear. When the day of rendition arrived Edward demanded the surrender of the town; but was answered that the town had been already relieved in terms of the treaty by the entrance of Keith with soldiers and provisions, and that they were now prepared to defend Berwick to the last. Enraged at this refusal the king ordered a gibbet to be erected for the execution of Thomas Seton, the son of the former governor, hoping perhaps that the heart of his father would relent and procure the desired surrender; but the gallant patriot stood firm to his trust, and young Thomas of Seton, his heir, was instantly executed.² Only a short time previous Sir Alexander had beheld his son William perish in one of the recent

naval encounters for the defence of Berwick, and now he witnessed, as he stood on the ramparts, the erection of the unsightly gibbet and the horrible execution of his young and beautiful Benjamin. Aghast at the spectacle, and dreading the fate that might befall the other hostages, the townsmen entered into a new treaty with the merciless Edward by which they agreed to surrender on the 19th of July unless their countrymen could throw reinforcements by land to the number of 200 men-at-arms into the town or defeat the army encamped before the walls.

In consequence of this rash and ill-advised agreement, which promised the arbitration of open battle instead of the advantages of a protracted warfare, Archibald Douglas paused in his English expedition, which might in the end have been successful for the relief of Berwick, and retraced his steps to encounter the enemy upon a ground of their own choosing. On the 18th of July he crossed the Tweed and encamped at Dunsepark; and on the afternoon of the following day advanced to battle with an army that did not exceed 15,000, divided into four bodies. The army of Edward, who had Baliol in his company, was also about the same number; but besides its superior equipments, it had greatly the advantage of position, for it was drawn up upon the slope of Halidon Hill, and had its front defended by a marsh. The Scots occupied a similar position on the opposite side of the morass, where they could not have been assailed except at great hazard; but, eager for the recovery of Berwick before its last sun had set, they threw away the advantage of their position, where they might have been the victors, and became the assailants. Their progress was interrupted by the marsh, which was impassable to cavalry, and here the leaders and the men-at-arms were obliged to dismount and continue their advance on foot until they were entangled among the swamps, where their lines were broken into irregular groups, each struggling to reach the enemy as it best could. Never were fairer marks presented to the English archery, and the opportunity was not lost; their arrows "flew as thick as motes in the sun-beam, and the Scots fell by thousands,"³ while they had neither lancemen to answer nor horsemen to disperse these terrible English yeomen, who steadily took their aim and loosed their shafts in full security. Still confident, however, in their plate and mail, which in many cases proved a frail defence against the cloth-yard shaft, the Scottish knights and squires pressed forward impatiently for a close encoun-

¹ *Scala Chron.* p. 162.

² *Scotichron.* l. xiii. c. 28; Wyntoun, l. viii. c. 85-112.

³ Old MS. in Bib. Harleiana, 4590.

ter, and on clearing the morass began to ascend the hill. But it was a hill on which one man might discomfit three assailants;¹ they were already out of breath with their struggle through the marsh and the weight of their armour; and the English ranks, standing in firm array, were ready to welcome their scattered assailants with brown-bill and spear and battle-axe. The struggle was desperate, but brief and hopeless; in the advance, and in the encounter that followed, the regent himself was mortally wounded and taken prisoner; the Earls of Lennox, Carrick, Athole, Strathern, and Sutherland, and James and Simon Frazer, were killed, and John and James Steward, uncles of the future Robert II., were mortally wounded. The leaders of the army and the chief nobles and barons of Scotland, with the greater part of the army itself, bereaved by their own rashness either of the opportunity of a fair fight or safe retreat, were numbered among the slain in this deadly and disastrous fight of Halidon Hill.² The triumph of the conqueror was increased tenfold by the thought that the country was now thoroughly subdued, as its army was defeated, and no man of mark was left to rally them for a fresh effort. The English loss also had been trivial compared with such a victory, as they had fought throughout with every advantage and had mainly obtained their success by means of their archery.

After the battle the town and castle of Berwick surrendered according to agreement, and Edward Baliol, who had commanded one of the wings of the English army, was once more recognized as King of Scotland. But it was only to act as factor to the King of England, into whose hands he seemed eager to give up not only the liberties of his countrymen, but even the kingdom itself, besides repossessing the English nobles of the estates they claimed in Scotland. This was manifested in his subsequent royal acts and his unlimited concessions to Edward III. He ratified the former treaty by which he bound himself to serve the English king in all his wars, and surrendered to him the town, castle, and territory of Berwick to be annexed in perpetuity to the crown of England. These degrading grants were made in a parliament he held at Edinburgh, where Geoffrey Scrope, the Chief-Justice of England, was claimant on the part of Edward III., and where the members had no choice but sub-

mission. He subsequently surrendered in like manner the forests of Jedburgh, Selkirk, and Ettrick, the counties of Roxburgh, Peebles, and Dumfries, and the county of Edinburgh, with all their towns and castles, and the constabularies of Linlithgow and Haddington.³ He seemed to be under a fit of drunken gratitude that would give up all as the reward of past favours, or of still more disgraceful fear that reckoned no price too high for the purchase of future safety. In his blindness he had even forgotten that in these bequests he had given away his own patrimonial estates as well as the property of others, and might have been a pauper but for the moderation of the English king, who excepted them by special declaration. And as if this surrender of the best part of the kingdom had still been insufficient, he finally presented himself before Edward III. at Newcastle-upon-Tyne, and did homage to him and swore fealty for the whole kingdom of Scotland, and the isles that belonged to it.⁴ In the meantime the national independence and its hopes were confined within very narrow and precarious limits, being comprised within five strongholds which were still held by the adherents of the good cause. These were Dumbarton Castle under the command of Malcolm Fleming; that of Lochleven, which was held by Alan de Vipont; Urquhart in Inverness-shire, by Thomas Lauder; Kildrummy, by Christina, the sister of Robert Bruce; and the castle of Lochdoon, which had for its castellan John Thomson, the same brave soldier of fortune who had distinguished himself in the wars of the Bruce, and led home the remains of the Scottish army from Ireland after the battle of Dundalk. Except at these hearths, the patriotism of the land could now obtain no shelter, while the craven king, backed by the power of the master to whom he had sworn allegiance, was able to rule undisturbed and barter its liberties as he pleased.⁵

But a power so insecurely founded could not be permanent, and the first shock it received was from those who had built it up. John de Mowbray, having died leaving daughters but no heirs male, his brother Alexander claimed the whole estates of the deceased to the exclusion of his nieces, and obtained a favourable verdict from Baliol. The latter perhaps thought when he put the male in possession, that a warlike baron would prove a more effectual adherent to his cause than helpless females; but he seems to have overlooked the fact, that by his award he destroyed his own title to the

¹ Wyntoun, b. viii. c. 27.

"Syne on thare fays clyme wp a bra
Quhare a man mycht dyscumffyte thre."

² Bib. Harl. MS. 4690; Tytler's *History of Scotland*, Appendix G G; Wyntoun, b. viii. c. 27; *Scotichron.* l. xiii. c. 28.

³ Rymer, *Fæd.* iv. 614-616.

⁴ *Scala Chron.*; Hemingford; Walsingham.

⁵ *Scotichron.*; Wyntoun.

crown, as the Baliols claimed it only through a female succession. His decision provoked the resentment of Henry de Beaumont, now Earl of Buchan, David de Strathbogie or Hastings, now Earl of Athole, and Richard Talbot, who shared with Beaumont the estates of the Comyns in Buchan and Badenoch; and on the rejection of their appeal in behalf of the disinherited ladies these powerful nobles resolved to eject the king whom they could no longer govern. Beaumont went to his castle of Dundarg in Buchan, and commenced war in due form by seizing a portion of the disputed estates that lay in his neighbourhood; the Earl of Athole fortified the castles of his own district; and Talbot, son-in-law of the Red Comyn, whom Bruce had despatched at Dumfries, armed his Scottish vassals over whom his marriage had given him the leadership. Baliol trembled at the gathering storm, and endeavoured to allay it by concession; but the offence had been given, and the proud chiefs refused to be pacified. At this opportune moment of dissension Sir Andrew Moray of Bothwell appeared upon the scene, having been released from his English captivity, and proceeded to rally the friends of liberty; while the Scottish ships of war, joined by those of France, blockaded the coast to intercept all supplies from England to its Scottish adherents. At this prospect of affairs Baliol lost heart and retreated to Berwick, where he reversed his decision in favour of Mowbray, and bestowed the estates of the young Steward of Scotland upon the Earl of Athole. But this tardy concession, while it failed to appease the resentful nobles, lost him the support of Mowbray, who went over to the cause of Bruce and joined his followers to those of Sir Andrew Moray.¹

A series of adventurous encounters mingled with political intrigues and tergiversations succeeded, too complex as well as individually too insignificant for historical narrative were it not for their importance in the recovery of the national independence. Talbot, in endeavouring to pass into England, was intercepted and defeated by a party of the Bruceans, who took him prisoner and shut him up in the castle of Dumbarton. Sir Andrew Moray and his new coadjutor Mowbray besieged the castle of Dundarg, and having compelled Beaumont to surrender, allowed him to depart into England. The stronghold of Dundarg, which might have defied the force of the besiegers, was reduced by cutting the pipes under ground that supplied the garrison with water. While two of the most influential of the English party were thus overcome, Robert the Steward of Scotland and its future king, now

a youth of nineteen years old, escaped from the island of Bute, in which he had been compelled to hide himself, and having reached Dumbarton in an open boat he raised his vassals, and with the aid of Campbell of Lochow stormed the castle of Dunoon in Cowal. He was soon joined by his "Brandanys of Bute," who rose against their English governor and put him to death; and by Randolph, Earl of Moray, who now returned from France, to which he had retired after the defeat at Halidon Hill. These nobles, now at the head of a considerable force and acting in the name of David II., cleared the districts of Ayr, Carrick, Cunningham, and Renfrew of the adherents of Baliol, and were appointed joint-regents of the kingdom by the lords of their party, whom their exploits had emboldened into action. It was now full time to march against the formidable Earl of Athole, who was not only strong in his large possessions both in England and Scotland, but obnoxious to the patriots in consequence of the claim which he made through the lavish grant of Baliol to the whole estates of Robert the Steward. He was unexpectedly assailed by the Earl of Moray before he could prepare for resistance, driven into the wilds of Lochaber, and reduced to such straits by famine that he was compelled to surrender. He had first forsaken the cause of Bruce, and joined himself to that of England; afterwards he had united himself with Edward Baliol; and now that the fortunes of the latter were at a low ebb he once more joined the party of the Bruces, for which Edward III. confiscated his estates in England. Such political transitions were the order of the day; and from our ignorance of the individual history of the actors they will always remain inexplicable. It may be that he, the owner of so many fair lordships and heir of the Baliol family after Edward Baliol himself, may have hoped in the dispossession of the latter to ascend the vacant throne.

These reverses obliged Baliol once more to take refuge in England and apply to Edward III. for aid; and the latter, to whom such an appeal was welcome, prepared in all haste to chastise the rebellious Scots by conquest and subjugation. Although winter had now commenced, he commanded a military muster to be made, which, however, was both reluctantly and imperfectly obeyed; and with a more scanty army than his requisitions had demanded he entered Scotland on the 14th of November, 1334. The Scots, either conscious of their own weakness or remembering the late king's dying advice, avoided an encounter, so that King Edward could effect nothing beyond a temporary occupation of Lothian, and hanging

¹ *Scotichron.* xiii. 29; *Wyntoun*, viii. 28.

as criminals a few of the insurgents who had fallen into his hands. A part of his army was commanded by Baliol, who wasted Annandale and its neighbourhood, after which the vain weak man proceeded to hold Christmas in kingly state at the castle of Renfrew, and to bestow Scottish estates and court offices upon his favourites as if all were once more his own. One at least of these donations was afterwards to prove most injurious to his interests; it was the investment of William Bullock, a warlike priest, with the office of chamberlain of Scotland and the command of the castles of St. Andrews and Cupar. In the meantime the cession of Lothian by Baliol to England and its occupation by Edward III., who was resolved that the grant should not be a dead letter, augmented the ranks of Scottish patriotism by the addition of the Earl of March. This powerful nobleman, after trimming between both parties and endeavouring by his alternate shiftings to keep well both with Scotland and England, had now discovered that Edward in the Lothians was a more dangerous neighbour to his interests than Edward at Windsor, or in the court of London. He therefore made haste to renounce by formal letters to that effect his homage and allegiance to the King of England, and to take part with the oppressed country in which most of his lands were situated.

It was soon after this return of a recreant Scot to his proper fealty that a warlike exploit gave additional courage to the rallying partisans of the house of Bruce. The castle of Lochleven, held by Alan de Vipont for David II., was so strong from its insular position and the difficulty of its access as to form a tempting mark for knightly enterprise and ambition, and as such it was besieged by John de Strivelin, who endeavoured to reduce it by blockade. For this purpose he erected a fort in the churchyard of Kinross, upon a neck of land nearest the castle, and repeatedly assailed it by water; but in every case his flotillas of boats had been beaten and driven back by the garrison. Strivelin then erected a strong and high bulwark across the lower end of the lake where the river Leven commences, hoping thus to lay the islet itself under water, and compel the half-drowned defenders to submit. The imprisoned waters began to accumulate, and trusting in the effect of his strategic device John de Strivelin repaired with the greater part of his soldiers to Dunfermline, to hold the anniversary of the canonized Queen Margaret of Scotland, believing that the castle would be ready for surrender at his return. But the garrison was doubly on the watch, and four of their number, armed with picks and crowbars, stole upon the unguarded mound, and

pierced it through; the mass of water quickly enlarged the opening, and the whole inundation burst upon the English camp and destroyed such soldiers as were left in it, after which the whole garrison sallied out and plundered and threw down the fort by which the loch was commanded. At his return Strivelin, almost frantic at the loss and havoc, swore by all the saints that he would never quit his enterprise until he had utterly razed the castle and put all its defenders to the sword; but the garrison, heartened with their success, resisted so vigorously that he was defeated in every attempt, and at last obliged to raise the siege. Both Fordun and Wyntoun exult in his defeat, because he committed a grievous sin in building a fort upon the consecrated ground of a cemetery.¹

Recent events had now so emboldened the adherents of King David that they summoned a parliament to meet at Dairsie in Fife in April, 1335. It was attended by the Steward and Moray the regents, the Earl of Athole, Sir Andrew Moray of Bothwell, the Earl of March, Sir William Douglas the Knight of Liddesdale, who had lately been freed from English captivity, Alexander de Mowbray, and other barons. But a meeting which danger itself should have made both cordial and unanimous, and which mere necessity should have stimulated to important enterprise, was rendered fruitless by the arrogance of the Earl of Athole, who attended with a numerous throng of retainers and thwarted all the counsels of his colleagues. The whole conduct of this young ambitious earl, in sowing dissension among the members and rendering all proposals nugatory, seems to indicate his ambitious designs upon the crown by weakening the cause of David II. Thus no plan of combined resistance could be organized, and the members were obliged to betake themselves each to his own sphere of action.² While such was the dissension among the Scottish leaders themselves, the mediation of France with the English king in behalf of Scotland was not likely to be regarded, for Edward must have seen in this disunion the full promise of conquest. For this he now entered Scotland in July with a stronger army than before, having also added to it a considerable force of foreign mercenaries and a band of Welsh, while his movements by land were accompanied by his fleet that entered the Firth of Forth. But still the weakness or the prudence of the Scots avoided an open encounter, so that Edward III. and Baliol marched on in their separate routes until they met in the neighbourhood of Glas-

¹ Wyntoun, b. viii. c. 29; *Scotichron.* xiii. c. 30.

² *Scotichron.* xiii. c. 34.

gow, where, having united their forces, they continued their career to Perth. But this victorious progress of the two kings was not wholly without interruption; the Scottish leaders, adopting a system of guerrilla warfare, hovered upon the flanks and rear of the English army, and succeeded in cutting off several detachments, one of which was a party of 500 archers that were killed to a man by the Regent Moray and Sir William Douglas of Liddesdale.¹

One of these skirmishes was peculiarly characteristic of the warfare of the period. Among the foreign auxiliaries of the English king was Guy, Count of Namur, who landed at Berwick with a strong body of men-at-arms and marched forward to join Edward at Perth, fearing no interruption by the way, as he believed that the country was already conquered. But he was shaken in his confidence when he arrived at Edinburgh, for in its neighbourhood were the Earls of March and Moray at the head of a considerable force to arrest his further progress. A desperate battle ensued on the Borough Muir, where the foreigners had the advantage of complete armour and powerful war-steeds, and might have gained the victory but for the arrival of the fierce Knight of Liddesdale with a reinforcement from the Pentland Hills that turned the scale. In this conflict such deeds of chivalrous prowess were performed that Fordun, or rather Bower, his continuator, becomes a very Froissart in narrating them. A Scottish esquire named Richard Shaw singled out for combat a gallant knight of the opposite party; they closed in full career, and such was the fury of the tourney that each fell dead at the same moment, transfixed with his opponent's lance. It was found, however, after the battle that the brave stranger was a woman disguised in knightly panoply. On the retreat of the foreigners, which was occasioned by the sudden arrival of Sir William Douglas, they fell back upon Edinburgh; and at St. Mary's Wynd a Scottish knight called Sir David of Annand was wounded. Enraged "at the sight of his own blood," he rose in his stirrups, upheaved his ponderous battle-axe "like another Corineus," and discharged such a stroke upon his adversary that the weapon went through plate and mail, through man and horse, until its edge was arrested by the stone pavement, on which it left a deep dint that was still shown in the days of the historian to verify such an incredible blow. On reaching the castle, which was at that time dismantled, the count and his soldiers rallied upon the rock, and having killed their horses to make a rampart of their bodies they

there calmly awaited the shock of their enemies. But the fight, or rather siege, though desperate was brief, and after a night of conflict the strangers were obliged to yield from weariness, hunger, and thirst. They not only received mercy but were set free without ransom; and when they took their departure for England the Earl of Moray, the Knight of Liddesdale, and his brother James Douglas escorted them to the Border. But this magnanimous act of courtesy was fatal to the Scottish warriors, for on returning they were assailed by William de Pressen, warden of the castle and forest of Jedburgh. James Douglas fell in the conflict, and Moray himself was taken prisoner and kept in durance in England for six years before he obtained his liberty.²

The capture of the one regent and the youth and inexperience of the other increased the defencelessness of Scotland, so that Edward III. was able to continue his progress without check and exercise the rights of a victor with merciless severity. Then, also, the versatile and unprincipled Earl of Athole, after his manifold changes, deemed the present a fit opportunity for advancing his ambitious purposes; and accordingly he returned once more to the cause of England and entered into a fresh agreement with its king, the principal effect of which was that he was appointed governor of Scotland under Edward Baliol. Being thus so nigh the throne, he proceeded to clear away the intervening obstacles by persecuting the adherents of Bruce; and this he was able the more easily to effect under a show of zeal for the interests of his new sovereign. But his career was quickly brought to an abrupt close. At the head of 3000 men he laid siege to the castle of Kildrummy, in which Christina, the sister of Robert Bruce and wife of Sir Andrew Moray of Bothwell, had found a home and protection during the depression of her family. Alarmed at her danger, Sir Andrew, aided by the Earl of March and the Knight of Liddesdale, advanced to raise the siege at the head of 800 men, and on their way they were joined by 300 from the neighbourhood of Kildrummy under the command of John Craig. They attacked Athole in the forest of Kilblene, and his troops fled after a brief resistance. The earl, though only accompanied by five knights, disdained to quit the field, and laying his hand upon the rock beside which he stood he exclaimed, "By God's face, you and I shall take the same flight together!" The whole party died to a man. Thus fell, from a useless pun-

¹ Knighton, p. 2567.

² *Scotichron.* xiii. 35; *Wyntoun*, b. viii. c. 30; *Scala Chron.* p. 165.

tilio and after an idle bravado, David de Strathbogie or Hastings, Earl of Athole, at the age of twenty-eight. His royal descent from Donald Bane, although crossed by illegitimacy, had filled him with ambitious aspirations which his inconsistent life only tended to thwart, and his useless death to throw away.¹

Sir Andrew Moray of Bothwell was now chosen regent of Scotland, and none could have been better fitted for such a crisis than one who had learned the art of war under Sir William Wallace. Nor was the condition of the country dissimilar to that which had existed during the days of his early youth; for another Baliol was upon the Scottish throne, with a new Edward for his taskmaster; the principal strengths as well as the best districts were under English rule; and of the chief barons of Scotland none were upon the patriotic side but the Earl of March and William Douglas the Knight of Liddesdale. Upon no resources could this gallant triumvirate calculate except the indomitable spirit of the people, that was as impatient of foreign rule as ever, and only needed a leader. In the meantime Edward III., who had left Scotland in the thought that all resistance was over, had his calculations disturbed by tidings of the death of the Earl of Athole, the election of Sir Andrew Moray to the regency, and the siege of the castles of Cupar and Lochindorb, which the insurgent patriots were blockading. But more alarming and more irritating than all these events was the encouragement afforded by the King of France to the Scottish revolt, and his avowed purpose to aid its efforts. He immediately sent down an army to Scotland, and soon after he joined it in person while it lay encamped at Perth, and proceeded to overrun the northern parts of the kingdom, which he effected with the usual cruelty that characterized these invasions. But in no case could he bring his wary enemy into the open field, where he might have ended the campaign by one decisive battle. Sir Andrew Moray, true to the example of his renowned preceptor, eluded the blow which he was not strong enough to resist, and by hovering upon the outskirts of the English annoyed their progress and selected his own opportunities for skirmishing. One singular instance recorded by Wyntoun of the wary prudence of this Scottish Fabius gives a striking picture of his fitness for conducting such a kind of warfare. While he abode with his band in a wood called Stronkaltere (the site of which is now unknown) King Edward, who at last had learned of his whereabouts, advanced by a hasty march to surprise him. He came so near

that the soldiers of his advanced troops had reached the Scottish outposts and interchanged a few blows with them, while tidings were carried to the encampment in the wood of what was happening at its entrance. But Sir Andrew at that moment was hearing mass, and none of his soldiers dared interrupt the stern old man until it was finished. When the mass was finished they hurriedly told him that the King of England and all his host were at hand; but he coolly replied, "There is no need of haste;" and when his horse was brought, instead of leaping into the saddle he proceeded coolly to examine its furniture and adjust its girths. The clank and tread of the coming array, the rustling of the forest branches, were fearful sounds of warning that made his men impatient to be gone at the instant; but at that moment another delay occurred: one of the straps of his cuisses had given way and he must needs repair it. He ordered a little coffer that held his stitching gear to be brought, and sitting down he took from it a piece of skin and proceeded to mend the broken strap. "I heard some of the knights who had been with him declare," says Wyntoun, "that they never in their day thought a delay so annoying as when he was shaping that piece of leather." When the last stitch was ended he commenced the retreat, but so slowly and in such complete order for battle that the English, who had now approached, did not dare to follow.²

Edward had not been long in Scotland when he found that the warfare he had to wage would be a competition of delay, in which the weaker party would have all the advantage, and of endurance, in which the Scots were better trained than the English. Notwithstanding their great superiority in numbers, discipline, and equipments, his troops marched and countermarched in quest of enemies who were continually at hand but could never be reached; and when they encamped it was amidst hourly alarms of an attack, while their outposts were cut off, and their foraging parties intercepted. To ensure a permanent hold of the country Edward proceeded to repair the formidable chain of fortresses which his grandfather had established; but to maintain these with proper garrisons a whole army was necessary. No sooner had he thus completed, as he thought, his conquest, and departed to England, than some fresh outbreak in Scotland occurred that required his presence; and thus, during this single year (1336), he was obliged once and again to return, while each hostile visit procured nothing more than a change in the war-

¹ *Scotichron.* xiii. 36; Wyntoun, b. viii. c. 31.

² Wyntoun, b. viii. c. 32.

SIR ANDREW MORAY OF BOTHWELL
MENDS HIS ARMOUR.

After the disastrous fight at Harbottle Hill in 1546, when the Scots were defeated by an army under Edward III, it seemed as if the Scottish people were completely subdued. This submission, however, was only superficial, for when Sir Andrew Moray of Bothwell returned from his captivity in England, he speedily rallied the friends of liberty, and defied the English king. Therefore that astonished monarch found it necessary to invade Scotland again, and in his hasty advance he came suddenly upon an outpost of the Scottish army. Thinking of this encounter was carried hurriedly to the Scottish camp, but as Sir Andrew was engaged in heroic deeds, no one dared interrupt his devotion. When at length he received the news he truly rejoiced that there was no lack of heart and as he found that one of the chiefs of his country was slain, he immediately gave the order to march. Not until the last attack was completed did he give his commands, and even then his small force rushed so slowly, and in such good order, that the enemy dared not follow.

SIR ANDREW MORAY OF BOTHWELL
MENDS HIS ARMOUR.

After the disastrous fight at Halidon Hill in 1333, when the Scots were defeated by an army under Edward III., it seemed as if the Scottish people were completely subdued. This submission, however, was only superficial, for when Sir Andrew Moray of Bothwell returned from his captivity in England, he speedily rallied the friends of liberty, and defied the English king. Wherefore that astonished monarch found it necessary to invade Scotland again, and in his hasty advance he came suddenly upon an outpost of the Scottish army. Tidings of this encounter was carried hurriedly to the Scottish camp, but as Sir Andrew was engaged in hearing mass, no one dared interrupt his devotions. *When at length he received the news he coolly replied that there was no need of haste, and as he found that one of the straps of his cuisses was broken, he straightway began to mend it.* Not until the last stitch was completed did he give his commands, and even then his small force retired so slowly, and in such good order, that the enemy dared not follow.



W. H. MARGETSON.

SIR ANDREW MORAY OF BOTHWELL, REGENT OF SCOTLAND,
SAYS "THERE IS NO NEED OF HASTE," AND PROCEEDS TO MEND HIS ARMOUR WHILE THREATENED WITH THE
ADVANCE OF THE ENGLISH ARMY (A.D. 1336).

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fare of the Scots, who dispersed at his appearance, but only to maintain their guerrilla form of annoyance. In the divided state of the country, and when so many of its nobles were either lukewarm or on the side of England, it was not merely the wisest, but the only system of national defence which the small band of patriots could adopt. In the meantime the brave old Sir Andrew Moray, the regent, was the presiding spirit of these skilful movements, and Sir William Douglas, the "Flower of Chivalry," their right arm in battle. After these remarks, that may suffice instead of a more particular account of skirmishes which were only important in their aggregate, it is enough to state that the greater part of the castles garrisoned by the English were successively recovered, and the English forces in Scotland reduced to the necessity of remaining on the defensive. By sea also as well as by land the Scottish patriots maintained the warfare, and endeavoured by harassing the English coasts to withdraw the invaders to the defence of their own country. With this view they hired a few galleys at Genoa to maintain a privateering warfare in the English seas; but the vessels, before they could be got to sea, were seized and burned by the Genoise regency, who were unwilling to be implicated in the war. More effectual naval assistance, however, was derived from France, where an armament was fitted out by the adherents of David Bruce, and with the connivance of the French king, that plundered the islands of Guernsey and Jersey, captured many of the English merchant ships, and obliged Edward to withdraw his attention from Scotland to the safety of his own dominions.¹

While Scotland by these wise and moderate proceedings was advancing step by step to the recovery of her freedom, it was fortunate for her that a new ambition occupied the mind of the English king. The Norman conquest of England, by giving sovereigns to the country who held large possessions in France, had complicated the interests of the two kingdoms in such hostile fashion that a constant series of wars had subsisted between them until they

had become hereditary enemies. Even the intermarriages between the royal houses of their sovereigns had only widened the breach; and it was from one of these ill-omened unions that Edward III. was now prepared to lay claim to the crown of France. This was on the plea of his descent from his maternal grandfather Philip le Bel, by which he now stood nearest to the French throne; upon nearly the same plea that John Baliol had claimed the crown of Scotland. But unluckily for him a male descendant of a younger branch of the royal house of France still survived, and by the Salic law of the kingdom his own pretensions through his mother were worth nothing, as by this law females were debarred from the royal succession. But Edward was in no mood to recognize the justice of a national ordinance which bore so hard upon his own personal interests; and his desire to supplant Philip of Valois, the French sovereign, was increased by the readiness which the latter had shown to befriend the interests of Scotland. Nor was that kindness on the part of Philip wholly disinterested. Aware of the ambition and talents of the English king, and fearing for his own new tenure of royalty as derived from the more remote line of Valois, he was ready to give the Scots just as much countenance and help as would prevent them from utterly sinking, and afford Edward full employment at home instead of seeking a fresh conquest. Thus for several years the war for the possession of France had been waging upon the fields of Scotland, and Edward had persevered in the attempt of its subjugation, in order that he might be at full leisure for a greater acquisition. But political events had now occurred that favoured his designs upon France, and he was willing to secure the opportunity though he should be obliged to leave Scotland unsubdued. In these political motives we are to read the causes of Edward's eagerness to conquer, and afterwards his readiness to quit Scotland, as well as the kindness of France in privately supplying it with money and ships for the struggle against its too powerful enemy. For more than two centuries to come we shall find the same stern necessity cementing the otherwise uncongenial alliance between the kingdoms of France and Scotland.

¹ Rymer's *Fœd.* iv. 709, 721.

CHAPTER II.

FROM THE WITHDRAWAL OF EDWARD TO THE RANSOM OF DAVID II. (1336-1357).

The Scots reject the proposal of a peace with England—Siege of the castle of Dunbar by the English—Its gallant defence by Black Agnes of Dunbar—The siege raised—Exploits of Ramsay of Dalhousie and the Knight of Liddesdale—Tournament of Scottish and English knights at Berwick—Chivalrous deeds at the tournament—Perth besieged by the Steward—William Bullock passes from the party of Baliol to that of David Bruce—Perth surrendered to the Scots—Famine in Scotland and its effects—Capture of the castle of Edinburgh by the Knight of Liddesdale—Return of David II. from France—Quarrel of the Knight of Liddesdale with Ramsay of Dalhousie—Ramsay treacherously captured—His cruel death—Similar death of William Bullock—Doubtful patriotism of the Knight of Liddesdale—King David invades England—Quarrels among the Scottish leaders—Signal defeat of David at Durham—He is taken prisoner and conveyed to London—The loyalty of the Steward called in question—Baliol invades Scotland—The Steward appointed regent—Exploits of Lord Archibald Douglas—England and Scotland visited by a destructive pestilence—David's treatment as a prisoner—His fruitless visit to Scotland in a treaty about his ransom—Degrading terms proposed for his liberation—Negotiations between the King of England and the Knight of Liddesdale—The knight enters into a treasonable compact—He is assassinated—New treaty for the ransom of David—It is broken off by French influence—The Scots invade England—Their victory at Nesbit Moor—Capture of Berwick by the Scots—It is retaken by Edward III.—Edward Baliol transfers his royal claims to the King of England—The king invades Scotland—His progress delayed by a crafty negotiation—His destructive inroad into Scotland—He is driven back by famine—Final treaty for the ransom of David—Terms on which he obtains his liberty.

The time had now arrived when Edward III. found it convenient to declare his French pretensions, and accordingly on the 7th of October, 1337, he publicly announced his claim to the crown of France. This was therefore to be a war at outrance which would occupy all his resources; and after he had found that he could not subdue the Scots he endeavoured to secure the safety of his own kingdom during his absence, as well as prevent them from sending aid to France, by overtures for a lasting peace. But the Scots were too wary to accede to proposals that were meant only to postpone his attempts for their final subjugation; and animated by their late successes, they saw in his departure for the Continent the promise of their own deliverance. They therefore rejected his offers and continued their resistance, so that Edward at his departure was obliged to leave an army in Scotland under the command of the Earls of Salisbury, Arundel, and Norfolk, with Edward Baliol as their nominal head. The utmost he could now expect from such a warfare was to secure the safety of his own dominions, and keep the Scots in full occupation at home, while he was pursuing his schemes of foreign aggrandizement.¹

The first effort of the English lords in Scotland was the reduction of the castle of Dunbar, the chief post held by the insurgent Scots on the eastern coast, and their principal means of communication with the Continent. Although the walls were strong and high, and the site of

the fortress favourable for defence, being a rock almost surrounded by the sea, its capture appeared inevitable, for the Earl of March, its owner, happened at the time to be absent. But his countess, commonly called "Black Agnes" from her dark complexion, was a daughter of Thomas Randolph, Earl of Moray, and in the spirit of her gallant father she resolved to defend the post against every assailant. When the Earl of Salisbury commenced the siege she took the command of the garrison, superintended the operations on the ramparts, and in scorn of the assailants wiped the dust from the wall with a handkerchief which she ordered a damsel to bring her when their heavy stone shot made tower and bulwark quiver. This cool contempt expressed in such housewife fashion incensed the English more than the substantial harms inflicted on them by the garrison, although these were sufficiently deadly. On one occasion a Scottish arrow went through the surcoat and habergeon of an English knight, went through three folds of his hacqueton that was under his chain armour, and pierced his body so deeply, that he fell dead on the spot. "Ha!" cried Montague, Earl of Salisbury, at this wondrous shot—"there goes one of my lady's tiring-pins: her love-tokens go right to the heart!" In their attack the assailants chiefly depended upon the engine called the "sow," which was now brought against the walls and used with deadly effect; but Black Agnes, who probably had heard the particulars of the siege of Berwick, and of the way in which this destructive machine had been demolished, was ready for the trial. In

¹ Rymer's *Fœdera*.

her scoffing vein she exclaimed to the Earl of Salisbury:—

“Beware, Montagow,
For farrow shall thy sow!”¹

And at the close of this rhyme a huge stone was discharged from the ramparts with such force and correct aim that the engine was shivered to pieces.

When the siege had lasted nearly five months the garrison of the castle, notwithstanding their successful resistance, were in danger of being reduced by famine, as they were closely blockaded both by land and sea. In this strait Sir Alexander Ramsay of Dalhousie resolved to make a bold venture for their relief. Embarking forty brave soldiers in a light vessel from the Bass at midnight, and carrying a large supply of provisions, he contrived to steal through the English fleet in the darkness, and enter a gate of the castle nearest the sea. He was received in triumph by the countess, and there was no more talk among the garrison of famine or surrender. Following up his successful adventure, Sir Alexander Ramsay on the following morning headed a sally, in which, without loss, he drove back and dispersed the advanced lines of the besiegers. Disheartened by the tediousness of the siege, and the little prospect of success, the English lords were glad to withdraw their forces, which they did in June (1338), and even to conclude a short truce or cessation of hostilities with the Scots. Their failure against a castle defended by a woman was not overlooked nor noticed without censure by the old chroniclers of England.²

The conflict for Scottish liberty was now continued in a series of skirmishes, and although about this period the brave old veteran Sir Andrew Moray, the regent, died, his loss was ably supplied by several chivalrous captains, who seem to have been especially fitted for that kind of guerrilla warfare which now constituted the best defence of Scotland. The foremost of these were Sir Alexander Ramsay of Dalhousie and the Knight of Liddesdale, of whom the first was wont to lurk with his band among the caves of Hawthornden like a lion on the watch, while the other hovered among the heights of the Pentlands and like an eagle swooped down upon the enemy when least expected. Although they thus held separate commands and waged the war each in his own fashion and upon different points, they completely harmonized in one common aim, and with actions which were best fitted to effect it. Thus Ramsay, besides clearing the neighbourhood of Roslin and cutting

off the supplies of the English garrison in Edinburgh, made an inroad into Northumberland, and returned laden with plunder, after drawing into an ambush and defeating a strong party of English who opposed him near Werk Castle.³ In another quarter the fierce and venturous Knight of Liddesdale, now renowned for his deeds as the “Flower of Chivalry,” drove the English out of Teviotdale, defeated them in several gallant encounters, and on one occasion routed Sir Laurence Abernethy, who five times renewed the battle during a single day, until he was finally taken prisoner.⁴ It was by deeds like these that the open country was cleared of the English, who were obliged to shut themselves up in the castles of Edinburgh, Perth, Stirling, Cupar, and Roxburgh, of which they still held possession.

In a warfare so suited to the spirit of romantic adventure an event occurred that strikingly illustrates the manners of the times and the character of the combatants. Henry of Lancaster, Earl of Derby, at that time sojourning on the Scottish marches, was kindled by the report of the brave deeds of the Knight of Liddesdale, and sent him a courteous invitation to run a joust with him of three courses, to prove each other's skill and valour. The meeting was granted; but in the first career, when the two combatants closed, the spear of Douglas shivered, and wounded him so deeply in the hand that the tourney had to be stopped. Derby then requested Sir Alexander Ramsay, who was in the Scottish company, to hold a joust upon a certain day at Berwick of twenty against twenty, and to this Ramsay assented. At the appointed time the Scots repaired to Berwick, and were hospitably entertained by their rivals; the lists were opened, and all was in readiness. The English earl wished to know of Ramsay in what manner he desired the courses to be run, to which the latter answered, that it should be with plated shields, as was the custom in such encounters—but that they were ready to ride in their kirtles alone should the other party wish it. This the earl thought too great a venture, upon which another proposed that they should fight with their visors open; but this proposal was also rejected, and it was agreed that the courses should be run with the usual armour and weapons. Three days these joustings lasted, in which two English knights were slain. On the part of the Scots Sir William Ramsay was struck through the helmet so strongly, that the truncheon of the spear was left sticking in his head; and as death was expected to follow in a few

¹ *Scotichron.* xiii. c. 40.

² *Scotichron.*; Wyntoun; *Scala Chron.*; Knighton.

³ *Scotichron.* xiii. 48.

⁴ *Scotichron.* xiii. 44; Wyntoun, b. viii. c. 36.

moments a priest was hastily brought, who shrived him in his harness. "Lo, here is a fair sight!" cried the delighted Earl of Derby—"how may a fairer be seen than that of a knight or squire thus shriven in his helmet! When I pass out of life, may God of his grace give me an end in such a way as this!" When the wounded man had been absolved Sir Alexander Ramsay set his foot upon his kinsman's head, and laying hold upon the broken truncheon wrenched it out by main force; upon which Sir William rose from the ground without help, declaring that he ailed nothing, and would soon be well. But he died almost immediately after. "What stout hearts these men have!" cried the Earl of Derby—and thus the lament for the dead was ended.

It chanced that Sir Patrick de Graham, a gallant knight who had newly arrived from France, and wished to be one of the twenty Scottish combatants, had come too late for the purpose. He was not, however, to be balked of his share in the entertainment, as Sir Richard Talbot kindly invited him to a tilt of three careers with sharpened lances. Talbot, although he wore armour of double plates, was pierced through both defences by the point of the other's lance, and would have been killed but for the unusual precaution he had adopted. After the fight he invited his opponent to supper; and while they feasted an English knight who was among the guests requested Sir Patrick to gratify him also with a joust of three careers. "Man, wilt thou needs joust with me?" cried Graham: "rise up then betimes to-morrow morning, hear mass and be shriven, and afterwards thou shalt be speedily delivered." This was no empty boast, for in the encounter the Englishman was run through the body, and left dead in the lists. This event concluded the three days of friendly contest, after which the prizes of valour were awarded, and the meeting was terminated with a hospitable banquet given to both parties by the Earl of Derby.¹

On the death of Sir Andrew Moray the vacant regency was conferred upon Robert, the Steward of Scotland. One of his first proceedings was to send the Knight of Liddesdale to France to obtain assistance from the French king; another was to make preparations for the siege of Perth, which the English had strongly fortified, and were resolved to retain at any price. Its possession, indeed, was of such importance to the English that Edward III., in the midst of his more important continental occupations, had carefully provided for its defence, and intrusted it to the command of Sir Thomas Ughtred, in whose valour and fidelity

he had full confidence; while Baliol, who was thus superseded in his charge of the town, retired to England, where alone he could live in safety. The resistance of Perth was so effectual that the attacks of the Scots were baffled, and the Steward was about to raise the siege when his hopes were renewed by the sight of five French ships of war that entered the Tay, bringing with them the Knight of Liddesdale, whose applications for aid had been thus cordially and promptly answered. In this armament was also a strong reinforcement of French men-at-arms commanded by Arnold d'Audineham, afterwards a marshal of France, the Lord of Garencleres, who had formerly served in the Scottish wars, and two distinguished esquires, Giles de la Huse and John de Bracy. After landing the soldiers, the French fleet, under its admiral, Hugh Hautpile, took possession of the mouth of the Tay, and so effectually prevented all supplies from being sent to Perth by sea that its final surrender appeared to be inevitable. One great effect also of this French interposition was to shake the confidence of those adherents of Baliol who had hitherto believed themselves to be on the gaining side, and win them over to the national cause. Of these the most remarkable was William Bullock, who at the outset of life had mistaken his vocation by becoming an ecclesiastic, his tastes being wholly for war, and who added to the prowess of a soldier a sagacity and skill in strategy not often to be found among the unreflecting warriors of the day. Becoming a favourite of Baliol, whose cause he espoused, he was raised by the new king to several lucrative offices, and appointed to the command of the important castle of Cupar, where he had defied every effort of the late regent to dislodge him. But his ambition and avarice were well known to the rising party that could now afford to purchase them; and the Steward, who for some time had been negotiating with him, acceded to his price, and by a grant of certain lands made him wholly his own. Bullock thus renounced his allegiance to Baliol and his alliance with England, gave up the castle of Cupar which he had so ably defended against every assailant, and with all the armed adherents he could muster repaired to Perth and became one of its most effectual besiegers. Such changes were too characteristic of the period to excite the reprobation they merited, and Bullock may have possessed as much knowledge of casuistry as to justify to himself the change he had made in turning from Baliol to Bruce, from a falling to a rising cause. It is right, however, to add that the step he had now taken he maintained consistently to the last.

¹ *Scotichron.* xiii. 43; *Wyntoun*, b. viii. c. 35.

The siege of Perth was continued with double vigour, and the presence of Bullock soon made itself be felt. Although the Knight of Liddesdale was sorely wounded by a dart shot from a springald, and the two captains of the Scottish archers slain, the besiegers by Bullock's advice continued their operations. An eclipse of the sun also occurred, that terrible phenomenon, more dismaying to a rude people than the worst of human wrath, and under which they had been wont to cower or betake themselves to flight; but under the animating orders of the warlike priest the Scottish tents were advanced and pitched nearer the town, and everything prepared for an assault and storm. The Earl of Ross, with a body of miners, had previously made an excavation and drawn off the waters of the fosse, so that nothing remained but to fill it up with faggots in order to reach the walls. Daunted by these skilful arrangements, and finding that he could resist no longer, Sir Thomas Ughtred surrendered, and was with his whole garrison sent to England, where, although his hasty cession of Perth was blamed and made the subject of inquiry in parliament, no punishment followed—a certain proof that he was considered to have done his duty, and yielded only to necessity. The fortifications of the town were dismantled, and the French auxiliaries who had ably aided in its capture were rewarded and sent home.¹ After this success the Steward laid siege to the castle of Stirling, which after a brave defence was reduced by famine. Froissart adds that at this siege cannon were used by the Scots; but of this circumstance Bower and Wyntoun have made no mention, which had it been true they certainly would not have omitted.

By the captures of Perth and Stirling the whole country to the north of the Firth of Forth was set free; and availing himself of one of those short intervals of peace which occasionally occurred, the Steward undertook a justiciary progress through Scotland. It was full time, indeed, that the resources of industry and the restraints of law should come into active operation from the state of the country during the wars of this long minority. Cultivation had been neglected, the fields were laid waste by friend and enemy, and the hamlets were abandoned by their starving inhabitants, while in their stead the wild deer from the mountains came down and browsed in herds in what had lately been populous districts. Such, indeed, was the intensity of famine, that while many fed upon raw nuts and acorns, which occasioned deadly diseases and an agonizing

death, some had recourse to cannibalism. Of these a hideous ghoul is particularly mentioned, who reduced this loathly practice into a system. Aided by his wife, this strong savage, who lurked among the mountains, was wont to spring upon and strangle all travellers and young persons male and female who strayed near his den, and subsist upon their flesh, while the name by which he was known was that of Christie Cleek, from the cleek or iron hook with which he secured his victims. In such a state of things the rights of possession must have been a nullity, and every morsel of food an object of contention. If we are to believe the historian Bower, the beneficial effects of this progress of the Steward were almost miraculous—"the kingdom once more began to prosper, the husbandmen cultivated their fields, the church of God was respected, and the priests returned to their wonted sacred duties."² But whatever might be the amount of these beneficial changes, the peaceful labours of the Steward were brief, for the truce quickly expired, and the war was resumed with all its former bitterness.

The first effort of the Scots was directed to the castle of Edinburgh, which from its situation in the heart of the kingdom, its almost inaccessible position, and the strength of its English garrison, had long been an eyesore and a rock of offence to the adventurous Knight of Liddesdale. He therefore resolved to attempt its capture; and fortunately for the enterprise he was associated on this occasion with the brave and skilful William Bullock, who planned and directed the operations. With them was also joined Walter Curry, a merchant of Dundee, who received the Knight of Liddesdale with two hundred armed followers into his ship, with which he entered the Forth, pretending to be an English provision vessel bringing supplies to the garrison. That his pretext also might pass current, he and his mariners shaved their beards, as was at that time the fashion in England. He soon opened a negotiation with the castle, and his offer of a present of provisions and wine was readily accepted by Limosin, the English governor. With a convoy apparently of unarmed men laden with supplies he was allowed to approach the castle, and at his call the gate was opened without suspicion. They immediately threw down their burdens in the entrance to secure it, prevented the portcullis from falling by a strong beam which they had prepared for the purpose, slew the gatekeeper and his two assistants, and sounded upon the war-horn the signal to Wil-

¹ *Scotichron.* xiii. c. 45; *Wyntoun*, b. viii. c. 37.

² *Scotichron.* viii. 46.

liam Douglas and his band, who were in ambush at no great distance. An alarm was instantly raised in the castle, but it was too late; Limosin and his followers on rushing down to the spot were encountered and driven back by the Knight of Liddesdale, and the brief conflict terminated in the death, capture, or dispersion of the whole garrison. The townsmen exulted in the recovery of that stately Acropolis which had already become their chief pride and ornament, and the command of it was conferred upon a natural brother of Sir William Douglas.¹

The recovery of national independence seemed now so fully ensured that the Scots were impatient for the return of their young king, who gladly assented to their application. He had now reached the age of eighteen years, half of which had been spent in exile in France; and the public sympathy, which so long an absence had tended to cherish, was no doubt increased by the condition of the kingdom, divided as it was among separate chieftains, each of whom acted as an irresponsible sovereign within his own sphere of warlike operation. With his queen Joanna he set sail from France, and after escaping the English cruisers they landed at Inverbervie in Kincardineshire on the 4th of May, 1341. Thus the reign of David II., hitherto merely nominal, commenced in earnest, and as far as can be judged from the records of the period it was distinguished by two inroads across the Border, in which Northumberland was invaded with the usual amount of wasting and plundering.² But it was soon evident that the young king was inadequate to the rule of such a country as Scotland. Besides his youth, he was utterly ignorant of the character and customs of his subjects; his education in France had inspired him with those tastes and that love of gay show and festivity which were, to say the least, most unsuitable to the kingdom and the crisis; and the warlike barons, who ruled by the right of their own good swords, were little disposed to submit to his authority when it militated against their own claims and interests. An example of this kind of rivalry, in the year that followed his return, gave a terrible illustration of the character and temper of his people, and the difficulties that beset his rule.

Of all those gallant warriors by whom his kingdom had been preserved during his absence and his crown secured, the most distinguished among them had been William Douglas the Knight of Liddesdale, and Alexander Ramsay of Dalhousie. The first, who reminded the

people by his successful deeds and daring enterprises of their favourite hero, the good Lord James, of whom he was the illegitimate son, had not yet shown the darker parts of his character; while the Knight of Dalhousie, equally brave and successful, seems to have possessed in a higher degree the qualities that constitute a great general—calmness and forethought to plan the details and meet the difficulties of a campaign, as well as the power of controlling the minds of others and turning them into implicit followers and instruments. So highly, indeed, was he regarded for these qualities that no young aspirant for knighthood was reckoned worthy of his spurs until he had served a campaign under the chief of Dalhousie.³ His last warlike exploit, which he performed almost immediately after the king's arrival, was the capture of the strong and important castle of Roxburgh, which he took by a midnight escalade; and to requite such good service David appointed him not only governor of the castle but sheriff of Teviotdale. It was a fatal act of royal gratitude, for Douglas himself had wrested Teviotdale from the English and obtained the sheriffship by right of conquest. Douglas vowed a dire revenge upon his old companion in arms, now his rival; and adding treachery to revenge, he pretended to be reconciled to him, by which Ramsay was thrown off his guard. The latter had occasion to hold a justice-court at Hawick, to which he repaired with a slender train; and Douglas, who had watched his motions, followed soon after and entered the court, which was held in the church. Ramsay welcomed his coming and invited him to a seat beside him; but Douglas, armed and ready for violence, rushed upon his unsuspecting victim, wounded him, dragged him from the tribunal, and throwing him bleeding across a horse, carried him off to his castle of Hermitage, where he immured him in one of its dungeons. What followed was, if possible, still more atrocious. Unvisited and deprived of all sustenance, the noble prisoner died of famine in its most lingering and terrible form, for he contrived to subsist for seventeen days upon a few chance grains of corn that dropped through a crevice in the roof of his dungeon, as a granary happened to be above it. And yet Douglas continued to be called the "Flower of Chivalry," and to be followed by such throngs of adherents as to set law and

¹ *Scotichron.* xiii. 47; *Winton*, viii. 38.

² *Scala Chronica*; *Scotichron.*

³ "He wes swa full off gret bowntè,
And namyd off prowes swa wes he,
That na yhowng man wes in the land,
That traystyd swa in his awyne hand,
Na lete, that he mycht prysde be,
Bot gyue a qwhill wyth hym war he."

Wyntoun, b. viii. c. 38.

retribution at defiance! As for David, he was so powerless to punish such an offender that he was obliged not only to pardon but even to reward him by investing him with the command of the castle of Roxburgh and the guardianship of the middle marches, besides reappointing him to the sheriffship of Teviotdale.¹

"After the death of Ramsay," says the continuator of Fordun, "it seemed as if an unextinguishable strife and endless discord had commenced in the kingdom not only among the lords but the commons also." Such, indeed, was to be expected from the rival interests at work and the feudal zeal with which the quarrel of every baron was supported by his followers and retainers. Of this hateful but also complex and incomprehensible warfare we find William Bullock the principal victim. This gallant priest, who is described as only a Zaccheus in stature although so brave in battle, and who, we are told, was wise and eloquent beyond any man of his time, had first been treasurer to Edward Baliol and was now chamberlain to the Scottish king. What was his offence or with whom he was at feud we are not told; but his wealth, ascendancy, and ambition were enough at any time to procure him powerful enemies, while his original rank gave him little chance of effectual adherents in a contention with the high-born and widely-connected nobles. In the height of his power and influence at court he was accused to the king of being a traitor, arrested by the royal order, and thrown, with a number of meaner criminals, into prison in the castle of Lochindorb in Moray; and there, like the unfortunate Sir Alexander Ramsay, he was starved to death.² Thus perished, after the national danger had passed away, the men by whom it had been mainly averted.

A truce which Edward III. at this time had established with France was also afterwards extended to Scotland; but during this cessation of hostilities the King of England was not idle. He began to tamper with the Knight of Liddesdale, not only as the most influential leader of the Scots, but as one whom the late atrocity in the case of Ramsay had marked as a man that might be purchased could his price only be reached. Douglas appears to have so far yielded to the temptation as to enter into negotiations with Edward and treat with his messengers about being received into the faith, peace, and amity of England, and the reward he was to receive for his apostasy. Whether any terms were concluded on this occasion we are unable to discover, but the fact that such overtures were made to him shows the estimate which the

English king had already formed of the soundness of his loyalty and patriotism.³ The treaty, however, from whatever cause, fell through, and immediately after Douglas made a furious inroad into England, where he burned Carlisle and Penrith, and unhorsed the Bishop of Carlisle, who attempted to drive him back. He may have thought that this hostile demonstration during a season of truce was necessary to refute the suspicions which his late negotiations with England may have occasioned. This inroad was the signal for war between the two nations, to which the Scots were instigated not only by the absence of Edward III. upon the Continent, but the entreaties of the King of France, who was anxious to arrest the course of his rival and give him full occupation at home. David issued orders for the muster of his army at Perth; and so tempting seemed the opportunity for a profitable invasion of England that a larger array assembled for the purpose than had met in Scotland for many years. But even already the difficulties of the campaign had commenced. Among the fierce rivals brought together into one encampment feuds of long standing began to break out, and in one of these William, Earl of Ross, assassinated Ranald of the Isles in the monastery of Elcho, after which he hastily withdrew with all his followers to the mountains. The islesmen, deprived of their leader, also retired to their homes, and thus the Scottish army was shorn of a considerable portion of its strength.⁴ Under these disadvantageous circumstances the march was commenced and the campaign opened. The first proceeding of the Scots was to lay siege to the castle of Liddel, held by Walter Selby, one of those Border chiefs who were ready to serve England or Scotland indifferently; and of such characters this personage seems to have been a very choice specimen. He first figures in history as one of that band of freebooters which, at the instigation of Robert Bruce, waylaid the two cardinals and the Bishop of Durham, and plundered them of those bulls and other documents which they were to use for the deposition of the Scottish king. He then defied his native sovereign, Edward II., against whom he held out the castles of Mitford and Horton. Then, wheeling about to the cause of Edward Baliol, he had done the latter such good service as to be rewarded with a grant of lands in Roxburghshire by which he was exalted into a Border baron of substance and consideration. But his last bargain had been driven, his last revolution

¹ *Scotichron.* xiii. 50.
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² *Ibid.*

³ Rymer's *Fœdera*, v. 379.

⁴ Wyntoun, b. viii. c. 40; *Scotichron.* xiv. 1.

between the contending parties finished. The castle was stormed after a siege of six days, and Walter Selby, the despiser of papal bulls and plunderer of cardinals, was sent by David to instant execution, without even being allowed a priest to confess and absolve him.¹

The Border invasion having been thus far successful, the military experience of the Knight of Liddesdale advised a retreat. He saw the discordant materials of which the army consisted, and the risk to which it would be exposed by a farther advance; and he suggested that not only enough of honour had been won already, but that the inroad might be repeated at a better opportunity. But this counsel filled the Scottish nobles with rage. "You have already got enough of English spoil," they cried, "and now you envy us the chance of a share! Must we fight merely that you may gain by it? Between this and London there are none to resist us. All the strong men and soldiers are with their king in France, and none are left at home but priests and monks, cobblers and mechanics." Every voice was clamorous for an advance, and David assented. They marched to Hexham, where during fourteen days they wasted the country with fire and sword; and in their progress through the bishopric of Durham they did not even spare the patrimony of St. Cuthbert, although the saint himself, according to the story, appeared to David in a dream at Ryton, and warned him of the consequences of such a deed of sacrilege. On the 16th of October, 1346, they reached the neighbourhood of Durham, and established their encampment at Beaurepair, now called Bear Park. The army, with the exception of two thousand men-at-arms, consisted almost wholly of light infantry, who, though very numerous, were better fitted for skirmish or plunder than the shock of a regular engagement. They were also unskillfully encamped; for the ground was intersected by hedges that separated the ranks from each other and deprived them of mutual support, and in front of them were so many undulations of hill and dale that the enemy could have stolen upon them unawares. Such a selection for encampment or battle could scarcely have been made by the advice of the experienced Knight of Liddesdale; but, as we have already seen, his suggestions on the subject, if at all offered, were not likely to be heeded. In the meantime preparations had been made to meet them that were very different from those of the "Chapter of Mytton," of which they seem to have expected a happy repetition. At the command of the English

regency the northern barons assembled their military vassals and the sheriffs their county arrays—not cobblers, leather-curriers, and artisans, as the Scottish leaders had expected, but stalwart yeomen and well-exercised archers under the command of the chief lords of the north of England and William le Zouche, Archbishop of York, who had raised the vassals of the church on the occasion to vindicate the cause of St. Cuthbert. To these were added ten thousand soldiers who were about to embark for Calais, but who joined the northern army at the command of Edward III. Altogether they composed a force of thirty thousand men, of whom the greater part were archers. It has often been asserted by modern historians that Queen Philippa herself commanded this formidable array, but the assertion only rests on the authority of Froissart, whose romantic imagination must in this case have been deceived.

The English army, by a rapid march, advanced towards Sunderland bridge. Unaware of their coming, David sent the Knight of Liddesdale, with the men-at-arms, to foray upon the church land of Durham, and collect forage and provisions. Douglas had not proceeded far when he unexpectedly found himself in the front of the whole English army. He then attempted a retreat, but was overtaken near Ferry of the Hill, and in the encounter that followed he lost five hundred of his best men, himself and the rest escaping with difficulty. The Scottish army was still ignorant of the nearness of the enemy, and was only apprised of it by the return of the Knight of Liddesdale and his followers at full gallop, and their cry that the English were at hand. Thus taken by surprise the Scots made hasty preparations for battle in three divisions, of which the right wing was commanded by the Earl of Moray, and the left by the Knight of Liddesdale, the Steward, and the Earl of Dunbar, while David himself took command of the centre. Even for these hurried preparations there appears to have been scarcely sufficient time, for the English were now advanced to Nevil's Cross in full order for battle, their ranks preceded by a large crucifix, and accompanied by the banners of the chief nobility of the northern counties. Yet even at this trying moment the condition of the Scots was not wholly desperate, and with a little prudence the chief difficulty might have been removed. Sir John de Graham, a brave and experienced knight, who marked the formidable advance of the English archers, and who probably remembered the expedient of Bruce on a similar occasion at Bannockburn, exclaimed to the king, "Give me but an hundred horsemen and we

¹ *Scotichron.* xiv. c. 1; *Scala Chron.*; Packington.

will disperse the archery!" "but to confess the truth," adds the honest historian, "he could not obtain one." He then attempted the feat with his own handful of mounted attendants, and made a furious charge upon the bowmen, in which some of them bit the dust; but his horse was slain under him, and he and his little band were quickly driven back upon their main body.

And now commenced the battle in earnest. The English archers, choosing their ground and selecting their mark, drew their bowstrings to the right ear, and discharged those deadly showers against which plate and mail were often a weak defence; and the English men-at-arms, following close upon their onset, rode in with couched lances wherever the arrows had made an opening. The first brunt of the storm fell upon the division under the Earl of Moray, the ranks of which, separated from each other by the hedges and ditches, could offer no effectual resistance, and they were cut to pieces or driven from the field, after their brave leader had been left among the slain. A cloud of bowmen, to the number of ten thousand, at the same time took up their position in front and flank of the Scottish centre, commanded by the king, and now deprived of its right wing. But perilous though the struggle was, and with every moment becoming more hopeless, the Scots obstinately continued the battle, which had commenced at nine in the morning and was protracted till midday; and when even all hope was gone they scorned to give way as long as their king was in the field. As for David himself, his useless courage as a man-at-arms, which served only to continue the carnage after resistance was unavailing, blinded his contemporaries to his culpable blunders as a general, and extorted the admiration of his enemies. Surrounded by a small band of his chief nobles he struggled against the thousands who were closing upon him, and with two arrows sticking in his body, one of which had inflicted a deep and painful wound, he still cheered his few followers to fight on. At length Sir John Copland, an English knight, closed upon him and seized him; but David continued to resist, and with the hilt of his dagger knocked out two of his captor's teeth before he was mastered and disarmed. With this event the battle of Durham or Nevil's Cross terminated. Its date, long after remembered in Scotland with sorrow, was the 17th of October, 1346. From the duration of the fight and the obstinacy of resistance it is evident that it might have terminated otherwise had the Scots been encamped on better ground and guarded against surprise. Their loss on this occasion was enough to negative all their late

successes, and throw them back into their former despondency. With the king there were taken prisoners the Earls of Fife, Menteith, Sutherland, and Wigton, and the Knight of Liddesdale; and among the slain, who are supposed to have amounted to about fifteen or sixteen thousand, were the Earls of Moray and Strathearn, David de la Hay constable of Scotland, Robert Keith the marshal, Robert de Peebles the chamberlain, Thomas Charteris the constable, and many others of knightly rank and reputation. The loss of the English, as in all those cases where the victory was chiefly won by their archery, was so trivial that no account was made of it. While the conquerors were occupied with the plunder Robert the Steward and the Earl of March contrived to detach the wing they commanded from the hopeless struggle, and lead it safely back to Scotland; and for this deed of precaution—through which, according to Walsingham, "that nation [Scotland] which has ever been rebellious was not cut off from the land of the living"—these nobles were severely reproached as traitors who had abandoned their king. This feeling seems to have been cherished in the heart of David, more especially against his kinsman the Steward, who, failing the direct royal succession, was to inherit the Scottish crown, and whom it is probable he already regarded with that jealousy and hatred which is usually entailed upon royal heirs-presumptive. Be the Steward's motive what it might, it was well for the kingdom that he was not detained upon the ruinous field of Durham either by chivalrous punctilio or even by loyal principle.¹

David, the unfortunate captive, was brought to London, and escorted to the Tower with the insulting pomp of a Roman triumph; for, as we are told, twenty thousand armed men composed his military escort, while the different guilds of the English capital in their proper dresses attended the procession. All this was done under the semblance of paying him honour, and he was mounted upon a tall black charger, that he might be more conspicuous to the huzzaing multitudes. But when the gates of the Tower had closed upon him he was made to feel his captivity by the scantiness of his accommodation, and the heavy tax which he was required to pay for it. In the meantime the English followed up their victory by capturing the castle of Roxburgh, and overrunning the districts of Tweeddale, the Merse, Ettrick, Annandale, and Galloway; and their temporary successes enabled them to boast that the new boundary of Scotland was from

¹ *Scotichron.* xiv. 2, et sequen.; Wyntoun, b. viii. c. 40; Barnes' *Life of Edward III.*

Coldbrandspeth to Soutra, and subsequently to Carlups and Crosscryne.¹ Baliol, also, who had fought at Durham under the English banner, reappeared in Galloway, and being joined by Henry de Percy and Ralph Nevil, he made a cruel irruption into the Lothians, and with his wild Gallowegians penetrated as far as Glasgow, and afterwards returned through Cunningham and Nithsdale, marking their progress with the desolations of fire and sword.² But it was not by such indiscriminate and savage proceedings that he was likely to win the crown of Scotland or the affections of the Scots, nor were the prospects of the people as yet so desperate, that they should receive either him or England for their master. After his return from the defeat at Durham the Steward was once more appointed regent, and he proceeded with vigour to put the kingdom in a state of defence. About the same time, also, William Lord Douglas, son of Archibald surnamed the Tyneman, slain at the battle of Halidon Hill, returned from France, where he had been educated, and began to signalize himself by deeds worthy of his name and family. He quickly drove the English out of Douglasdale, and took possession of Ettrick Forest. To protect Teviotdale Sir John Copland, the captor of King David, for which feat he had been rewarded with the government of Roxburgh Castle, advanced with a considerable force; but the men of Teviotdale, abjuring the cause of England, joined the Douglas, and Copland was put to the rout. "This William," says the old historian, "was a very warlike lord; and in proportion to his love of peace and desire to preserve the freedom of the marches was his keenness in making war to obtain these advantages."³

In this state of depression it was well for Scotland that Edward III. was so wholly occupied with the war in France and the siege of Calais as to have neither time to bestow nor troops to spare for the Scottish conquest; while the English regency that governed during his absence was so well satisfied with having protected their borders by the victory of Durham, that they wisely abstained from the responsibility and risk of an aggressive warfare. In this case the cause of Edward Baliol, which had served England as a pretext, was of no further use, so that he was again obliged to withdraw into obscurity within the shelter of the English border. The capture of Calais by Edward III., which was followed by a truce between France and England, in which the Scots were included, tended still further to relieve the Steward from his embarrassments and

give time for the recovery of the nation from its disasters. But a visitation more terrible than the wrath of man, and under which war was everywhere compelled to pause, reduced the Scots and English more effectually than any treaties could have done to a state of peaceful inaction: this was the pestilence of 1345, the most destructive visitation of the kind that had ever afflicted humanity, and which, not confining itself to one country or region, passed like a destroying angel over the fairest kingdoms of Asia and Europe, and is said to have destroyed a third part of mankind in its terrible career. Even making every allowance for the exaggeration of the old historians, it seems to have been more terrible in its inflictions as well as more wasteful in its effects than any visitations of the modern cholera. It did not reach our island until the latter part of 1348, when it first appeared in August on the coasts of Dorsetshire, Devonshire, and Somersetshire, from which it afterwards spread over the whole kingdom. Such was the terror it inspired, that everywhere the concourses of men were dispersed; even the holding of parliaments and courts of justice was abandoned for two years, and in London alone more than half of the inhabitants were swept away.⁴ In such a general visitation, by which every kingdom in the known world had been afflicted in turn, Scotland could not expect to escape. Thither accordingly it came in 1349, sweeping off men, women, and children, and making such quick work of its victims that they generally died after a two days' illness.⁵ But although it compelled a mutual forbearance of strife between the Scots and English, it could not abate their mutual national rancour; and the entrance of this pestilence from England into Scotland was represented by the writers of the former country, not as a natural event, but as a judgment of heaven brought on by the reckless impiety of the people. Thus we are told that when the Scots first heard of its havoc among their neighbours they turned it into a subject of mirth, and in conversation adopted for their common oath, "By the foul deaths of the English!" It is added, that to aggravate the heavy judgment of God they made a muster in Selkirk Forest for the purpose of invading the northern borders, but had not proceeded far into England when they caught the infection, and after losing 5000 men were easily beaten back into their own country, carrying the pestilence along with them.⁶ "So that Scotland," says Barnes, "partook of the universal contagion in as high a degree and in the same

¹ *Scotichron.* xiv. 5.

² Knighton; *Scotichron.*; Rymer's *Fœdera*.

³ *Scotichron.* xiv. 6.

⁴ Barnes' *History of Edward III.*

⁵ *Scotichron.* xiv. 7; Wyntoun, b. viii. c. 42.

⁶ Knighton; Stow.

manner as other countries had done before them; only in this there was a difference, that whereas other nations with trembling sat still and waited for it, the Scots did seem ambitious to fetch it among themselves." Such was the popular rumour in England at a time when men's minds were so troubled or so unnerved that every report was readily believed; though, perhaps, it was not more true than the charge brought against the Jews of having occasioned the plague by poisoning the wells and fountains, in consequence of which accusation thousands of that unfortunate people were massacred. It is certain that we find no notice in Scottish history of this muster in Selkirk Forest; and it is not in the nature of armies, however brave, to march into the very heart of a loathsome and dangerous pestilence in quest of revenge or military glory.

In the meantime the Steward had not been remiss in efforts for the liberation of his sovereign; and in the earlier part of 1348 he commenced negotiations to that effect. But although the queen Joanna was allowed towards the close of the year to repair to London for the purpose of visiting her husband, he was still kept a prisoner in the Tower. On great state occasions, indeed, the Scottish king was brought from his confinement and arrayed with princely insignia; but it was only as an ornament of the pageant or a trophy of the victories of Edward. One of these appearances of David was at Windsor upon the institution of the order of the Garter, where he attended the tilts and tournaments held on that memorable occasion, "the harness of his horse being made of blue velvet at King Edward's charge, with a pale of red velvet, and beneath it a white rose embroidered thereon."¹ But his white rose must have shrunk into conscious insignificance beside the magnificent white swan, "gorged or," which Edward had adopted for his cognizance, and the defiant motto which was inscribed upon his surcoat and shield:—

"Hay, hay the white swan!—
By God's soul, I am thy man."

Two years after we find the treaty continued or renewed, with the additional object of confirming a perpetual peace between the two nations; and that the terms might be satisfactorily adjusted between the Scottish king and his nobles David was permitted to visit Scotland. But at his departure from London he was bound by solemn oath to return to confinement if the stipulated terms were not accepted, while seven of the eldest sons of the chief Scottish nobles

were surrendered to Edward as hostages for the due observance of the oath. The conditions which were to be offered to the Scottish council as the terms of their king's deliverance have not been recorded in our national annals, and they seem to have been of too mysterious a nature to be committed to writing; but that they were sufficiently extortionate may be surmised from the fact that the Scots refused to assent to them, although the freedom of the son of Bruce was at issue. David, therefore, after his short and unsatisfactory visit, was obliged to return to his lodgings in the Tower of London. From our knowledge of his subsequent compliances, combined with the ambitious grasping character of Edward III., we may safely conclude that Knighton's statement is the true one. It is, that David, having sworn allegiance to the King of England, had pledged himself to bring the whole Scottish nation to the same state of submission. It is too true, indeed, that shortly after his return from Scotland this recreant son of the heroic Bruce subscribed two instruments recognizing Edward as his lord paramount and consenting to take the oaths of vassalage; and that to his everlasting shame the proofs of this submission still exist in the unmistakable form of two documents subscribed by him to that effect in the charter-house of Westminster. It is not unlikely that he was weary of so long a bondage, more especially as it must have been aggravated by the few glimpses of liberty with which he was occasionally indulged; and that his epicurean spirit, unequal to the struggle, was willing to purchase full deliverance from prison, let the cost be what it might. The price in this case he may have deemed was all the less that he had no son of his own to succeed him; and he could thus line with thorns the crown of Scotland, which was to descend to the Steward, whom he hated. Such are the only extenuations, miserable though they be, upon which his disgraceful surrender of the fruits of his father's toils, of his own independence, as well as the rights and liberties of his people at large, can be either understood or palliated. It is gratifying to find, in such a case, that his mission to Scotland was ineffectual. The same historian adds that the Scots were indignant at the proposed condition, by which they were to be reduced to vassalage along with their king, and rejected it with one voice. They were ready, they said, to pay the ransom of his deliverance, but that no consideration would make them sacrifice their independence.

But besides tampering with King David, whose facile character he must by this time have understood, Edward III. had been negotiating with two persons who had the highest

¹ Barnes' *History of Edward III*

influence in Scotland, and without whose concurrence any cession of their sovereign was likely to be of little value. These were Lord William Douglas, whose return from France after the battle of Durham had been so opportune for the country, and William Douglas, the Knight of Liddesdale. With the former, who was now the head of his illustrious house, the attempts of Edward were unsuccessful, and Lord William continued to maintain for Scotland the districts which he had so gallantly won from the English.¹ But very different was the conduct of the "Flower of Chivalry," upon whose escutcheon was the cross-bar of illegitimacy, and who had to win his way by royal favour or his good sword. We have already seen how serviceably the last had befriended him, and now that he was a prisoner he was ready to adopt the other alternative. He therefore became the liegeman of the English king, and as such the enemy of that national independence which, more than others, he had tended to establish. He now engaged to serve Edward in all his wars, except those against his own countrymen, and with this proviso also, that he might remit the latter clause when it should be his pleasure so to do. Should the French or other foreign allies of the Scots aid the latter in invading England, he agreed to use his utmost endeavours to hinder and annoy them. In the event of an invasion from England he and his were to be exempt from molestation, on the condition of observing similar forbearance towards the English troops, and giving them a free passage through his lands and territories. In no way, either openly or in secret, he was to give counsel or aid against the King of England, whether on behalf of his own nation or of any other. Such were the stipulations by which he tied up his hands from aiding his country, or could only loose them to strike with its oppressors; and all this he guaranteed under the penalty of being held "a disloyal and perjured man, and a false liar"—as if the treaty had not already made him such! For these concessions he was set at liberty, and enriched with his old territory of Liddesdale and Hermitage Castle, and certain estates in the district of Annandale.² But this munificent grant of the English king could in the first instance little avail the recreant Knight of Liddesdale, as the territories in question had been cleared and won, and were now rightfully occupied, by a better Douglas than himself; and it is not unlikely that the boon had been selected in the hope that two such formidable chiefs would weaken the national strength by their rivalry, and prepare

the way for English aggression and conquest. But the question of ultimate possession was soon decided. The friends of Scottish liberty had taken the alarm, and through the exertions of Lord William Douglas and the Steward the Knight of Liddesdale at his return found every district closed against his machinations in behalf of England. Soon afterwards he was himself beset and assassinated by Lord William Douglas, his relative and godson, while hunting in the forest of Ettrick. The motives that prompted Lord William to a deed that, on account of the spiritual relationship of the parties, was reckoned scarcely less than actual parricide, have been referred to mere revenge for the murder of Sir Alexander Ramsay; but an old Scottish ballad traces the deed to a deeper and more likely inducement. The "Flower of Chivalry," who seems to have possessed a full share of the knightly profligacy of his order, is alleged to have seduced the affections of the wife of Lord William, and thus the injured husband swept from his path a rival who was held to have forfeited the usual rights of combat.³

The treaty which had been so unsuccessful in 1351 for the liberation of David was resumed two years after, and for this protracted delay other causes may be found than the remissness of the Steward or the poverty of the kingdom. The king's visit to Scotland, and the degrading proposals of which he was the willing bearer, had cooled the loyalty of his subjects and awoke their suspicion; they saw that he was under English influence, and they dreaded its effects, in the event of his restoration, both to themselves and the country. At the meeting now held by the commissioners of the two kingdoms at Newcastle, where David himself was present, those of Scotland stipulated that before contributing for his release he should bind himself to withdraw from evil counsellors, and grant a full indemnity for all offences committed in Scotland during his absence. This must have been an unpalatable proposal to David and his English supporters, and was perhaps the cause of protracting the treaty till near the close of the following year, when it was concluded upon the terms that 90,000 marks should be paid by the Scots for the ransom of their king, by instalments of 10,000 marks annually over a course of nine years. During this period also there was to be a truce between the two nations, and twenty young men of noble family were to be given by the Scots as hostages for the observance of the treaty. All was ready,

¹ Rymer's *Fœdera*, v. 737.

² *Fœdera*, t. v. p. 739.

³ *Scotichron.* xiv. 8. Ballad quoted by Hume of Godscroft in his *History of the House of Douglas and Angus*.

and only waited the ratification of the Scottish regent, when the arrival of an envoy from France arrested the proceedings. A nine years' truce between England and Scotland would have been unfavourable at that time to French interests, and an envoy, Eugene de Garencieres, was sent at the crisis to interrupt the treaty. He arrived in Scotland with a military retinue of sixty knights, and a still more welcome reinforcement of forty thousand gold moutons, by a skilful distribution of which he induced the Scottish nobles to break off the treaty and continue the war. David's hopes of liberty were thus extinguished at the height, and from Newcastle, the border of his own dominions, he was marched back to his old lodging in the Tower of London.¹

Hostilities were now commenced by the English of the Northumbrian border, and directed chiefly against the territories of the Earl of March, who had been one of the most urgent of the Scottish commissioners at the late treaty, and afterwards, on the arrival of De Garencieres, the foremost to oppose it. Eager to retaliate, March, aided by William, now Earl of Douglas, and the French men-at-arms, advanced to the Border, and seizing a strong position on Nesbit Moor sent forward Sir William Ramsay of Dalhousie with four hundred men to plunder Norham and its neighbourhood. This commission Ramsay executed to the full, and on his return he insultingly paraded his plunder before the walls of Norham Castle. Enraged at this defiance, Sir Thomas Grey, the keeper of the castle, rushed out at the head of a strong body of cavalry and a band of archers, upon which Ramsay, after a short resistance, betook himself to flight. But this flight was only a feint, for the pursuit allured the English across the Tweed and round the side of a hill, concealed by which Earl Douglas, the Earl of March, and Garencieres had been waiting for their coming. But Grey, who was as chivalrous as any knight of the Round Table, disdained the thought of retreat: he called to him his son William, whom he knighted on the spot, and encouraging his men-at-arms to dismount and fight on foot along with the archers, he led them on to the unequal encounter. But although the garrison of Norham, from the importance of such a military Border post, was composed of brave men, they were overpowered after a desperate resistance, while Sir Thomas Grey himself, his son, Sir James Dacre, and most of the soldiers, were taken prisoners. The rancour of revenge between the two nations was now giving place to the more profitable considerations of ransom

and exchange of prisoners, and hence the small number of the English who fell in this well-fought conflict of Nesbit Moor.² One incident of cruelty by which it was stained is particularly noticed by our old historian,³ but it was the deed not of an Englishman or Scot, but one of the French knights. This fellow, who deserved to have had his spurs hacked from his heels by the scullion's cleaver, purchased a few of the English prisoners from their Scottish captors, and leading them to a retired spot beyond the hill struck off their heads, in revenge for the death of his father, whom their countrymen had slain in France.

The next attempt of the Scots was directed to the recovery of Berwick, now in possession of the English, but the capture of which was usually a work of difficulty proportioned to its importance. By land it was too strongly fortified to be assailed with hope of success, and the Earl of Angus, who had carefully studied the enterprise, resolved to attempt it by sea. Assisted by the Earl of March they drew from several harbours a considerable force of ships well furnished with soldiers, who were landed in the darkness of a November night near the walls, which they reached unsuspected. They planted their scaling-ladders and reached the ramparts, after which they burst into the streets, bearing down all resistance, which was awakened too late, the citizens in all directions flying from their beds, and leaping from the city walls in their shirts. Many of the fugitives betook themselves to the Douglas Tower, a strong fort that maintained the communication between the city and the castle; and thus carried the alarm to Sir John Copland, the governor of Northumberland, who resolved by a night attack from the Tower to recover Berwick; but the Scots were on the alert, and in the sally that he made for the purpose he was not only driven back, but the Douglas Tower itself was taken by the Scots. Still, however, the castle held out and defied their utmost efforts. While matters thus stood the regent arrived at Berwick, and fearing that the town might be retaken by the garrison he left what forces he could spare for the defence of Berwick, which he was unwilling either to demolish or abandon to the enemy. At the same time he sent home the French auxiliaries, with cordial thanks for their good services.⁴ Why he parted with such useful allies, and at such a critical period, it is difficult to conjecture; but it may be that he was desirous of keeping open the opportunity of negotiating with England for the establish-

¹ Knighton; *Fædera*; *Scotichron.*; *Scala Chron.*

² Wyntoun, b. viii. c. 42.

³ Fordun, l. xiv. c. 9.

⁴ *Scotichron.* xiv. 10; *Scala Chron.* in Leland, p. 565.

ment of peace and the liberation of King David, which the stay of the French in Scotland would have tended to prevent. These precautions, however, were rendered useless by the abrupt return of Edward III. from France, enraged at the opposition of the Scots and the interruption they had caused to his career of foreign conquest; and he advanced upon Berwick with an army of eighty thousand men and the prestige of his recent victories. Against such a force the garrison left by the regent in Berwick could only make a brief resistance, and they were compelled to surrender on an assurance of safety in life and limb, and permission to retire to Scotland.¹

The town having thus once more changed its masters, was now to become the stage of a political pageant significant of the fate of the kingdom at large. Hitherto, since the battle of Dupplin, we have seen Edward Baliol appearing by fits, like a bird of evil omen when the hour was at the darkest, but as suddenly vanishing at the approach of light—leaning upon English aid, and utterly helpless when bereft of it—and careless of the means he adopted to win a crown which he had shown himself unfit to wear. His whole career, indeed, was a striking and degrading contrast to that of the heroic Bruce, whom he was so anxious to succeed. But he had at last become weary of his oft-defeated attempt; he was still a childless and now an old man, and while he felt that the tenure of such a troubled throne for life only, without leaving a family to inherit it, was scarcely worth the toil and the risk, he must have been convinced at last, however late, that he was only working for Edward III., into whose hands the possession of Scotland must ultimately fall. On the 20th of January (1355) Baliol accordingly appeared before the English king at Berwick, and there surrendered to him all his rights and claims to the kingdom of Scotland, symbolizing the solemn act by taking off the golden crown which he wore, and presenting it to Edward along with a handful of earth which had been lifted from the Scottish soil. In this way the kingdom and crown of Scotland, its isles and all other pertinents, were bestowed like a farm, with its tenants, serfs, and cattle, and bestowed by one who had no more real possession in the land than that of the few grains of earth which he thus gave away.² The boon was graciously received, and in requital a yearly pension was settled upon him of £2000 sterling. After this deed of renunciation, by which the hero of Dupplin and King of Scotland retired from the

busy scene, and became, like his ancestors, an English baron, history threw him so utterly aside that nothing but the fact of his death obtained a passing notice.

On receiving this investiture Edward resolved to substantiate it by war and conquest. The Scots in the meantime were not idle, and knowing their inability to resist Edward in the field, they had recourse to the old national plan of defence. Some time, however, was necessary to lay waste the country and remove the cattle and provisions; and to obtain it Earl Douglas and several of the nobles repaired to the English king, who had already commenced his march, and by a feigned negotiation about the terms of submission induced him to suspend his proceedings. It was a trial of diplomacy, in which Douglas, like Randolph, showed himself a master; and Edward, cunning though he was, allowed himself to be hoodwinked while the Scots were sweeping their fields, and withdrawing their families and cattle to the fastness.³ The ten days' truce which Douglas had obtained being at an end, he abruptly closed the negotiations and retired, and Edward, maddened with rage and shame, advanced into East Lothian. But he found everywhere a wilderness, and he could only wreak his vengeance by giving every town, village, and hamlet to the flames. In this way he marked his course to Haddington, not even sparing the churches and monasteries, while the whole country as he advanced presented an inundation of fire and smoke that extended in its progress to Edinburgh. Never indeed by Edward I., or even the tyrant John, had Scotland been so visited; never had sacrilege been so wantonly connected with the wasteful havoc of war; and for ages afterwards the event was commemorated in Scotland as the "Burnt Candlemas." But at every step the difficulties of the invaders multiplied; there was neither forage for the horses nor bread for the soldiers; and it was remarked as a sore calamity, and most unwonted for Englishmen on military service, that for fifteen days the army had nothing to drink but fresh water.⁴ The cold winds and frosts of January increased the distress of the troops, while the houses that might have sheltered the invaders they had wantonly destroyed; and from every pass and concealment in front, flank, and rear they were incessantly assailed by armed parties of the Scots, who by the destruction of their homes were converted into ready soldiers and sharp avengers. To add to Edward's disasters the elements themselves were opposed to him

¹ Barnes' *History of Edward III.* p. 486; *Scotichron.*

² *Scotichron.* xiv. 12.

³ Robert de Avesbury in Leland's *Collect.* i. p. 236.

⁴ Knighton, p. 2611.

by sea as well as land, for his victualling fleet from Berwick, under the command of Lord Morley, which he had appointed to enter the Firth of Forth and meet him with supplies at Leith, was dispersed and wrecked by a tempest. Thus he was obliged to retreat like a fugitive and with a wasted army, although neither battle had been fought nor advantage won. Amidst the disorder of this retreat the Scots, as they were wont, became the assailants; and on one occasion, upon the border of Ettrick Forest near Melrose, Edward himself was nearly taken prisoner in a sudden and destructive assault of an ambush conducted by Earl Douglas. He reached Berwick in safety, and to cover the shame of his bootless expedition he published a pompous proclamation, declaring that as sovereign of Scotland he was resolved to protect and maintain inviolate its ancient usages and laws.¹

Events must have now convinced the English king of the unprofitableness of a Scottish war. It had distracted his attention in France, notwithstanding his successes, and obliged him to hurry to England when his prospects on the Continent were at the brightest. He had led an army into Scotland, which, from his past experience, he might well have judged sufficient for the conquest of France itself, and had effected nothing beyond the burning of huts and hovels. While he had thus failed in achieving the conquest of Scotland his failure must have loosened his hold upon France, and by persisting in both objects he was likely to be successful in neither. Being, moreover, in sore want of money for the prosecution of his continental schemes, the ransom of the Scottish king was not to be despised; and in David he knew that he had an assured adherent almost as compliant as Baliol himself, and through whom he might obtain the submission of Scotland more effectually by policy than by arms. Such considerations were too obvious to escape the notice of a politician like Edward III., and the negotiations for the ransom of his royal captive were resumed with a heartiness and

sincerity on both sides that promised a satisfactory conclusion. After the preliminaries had been settled with the Scottish commissioners sent to London for the purpose, the town of Berwick was appointed as the place for the final adjustment of the treaty. Thither the Scottish delegates chosen as their representatives by the three estates in parliament repaired, with a splendid following worthy of a great national event, the Bishop of St. Andrews alone having a train of thirty knights and their esquires; and thither also came the unfortunate David Bruce, with the English commissioners, and escorted by the whole military array of Northumberland. The meeting was opened in August, 1357, and the treaty was concluded on the 3d of October, the terms upon which the Scots were to recover their sovereign being so exorbitant that their assent to the conditions was scarcely in accordance with their wonted prudence and poverty. The conditions were, that they should pay a ransom of £100,000—more than equal to twelve times that amount in modern money. This sum was to be paid by instalments of £4000 annually, and to insure due payment the Scots were to deliver as hostages twenty young men, the heirs of noble families, into the hands of Edward; and besides these, three out of the chief nobility of Scotland were to reside in England by turns until the whole debt was discharged. In this way the country was to be not only drained of its money, but deprived of its hereditary leaders, that it might sink helplessly into the vassalage which Edward had designed for it. During the term of payment a truce was to continue between the two countries, with a free commercial intercourse both by land and sea; and on failure of punctual payment of the ransom, at whatever time the defection might occur, David was bound to return to his captivity. Weary of so long a delay and so many disappointments, and forgetful of their past precautions while treating for the deliverance of their king, the Scottish commissioners assented to these hard stipulations, and David was set free after a captivity of eleven years.²

¹ *Scotichron.*; Robert of Avesbury; Knighton.

² *Fœdera*, t. vi. 39-68.

CHAPTER III.

REIGN OF DAVID II. FROM HIS LIBERATION TILL HIS DEATH (1357-1371).

David's welcome from his subjects—His churlish requital—Difficulties in the payment of his ransom—Hopeless application to France for aid—Effects of the truce with England—Scotland sacrificed in a treaty between England and France—Catherine Mortimer, David's mistress—Her assassination—Success of Edward's designs upon Scottish liberty through the truce—David's rash proposal to his parliament in favour of an English successor—Its indignant rejection—League of the nobles against David—They are reduced to submission—David's marriage with Margaret Logie—Dislike of the nobles at the marriage—David's disgraceful compact with the King of England—Its terms—Its treacherous tendency against the liberty of Scotland—Willingness of the Scottish parliament for a permanent peace with England—Their liberal offers to obtain it—A previous truce established—Its effects on the patriotism of the Scottish nobles—Inability of the country to discharge the royal ransom—A new war between France and England lowers the tone of Edward III. towards Scotland—David suppresses a Highland rebellion—Proceedings and enactments of a parliament held at Perth—Margaret Logie divorced—She escapes from Scotland and appeals to the papal court—Last illness and death of David II.—His character.

The whole kingdom of Scotland was jubilant at the return of their sovereign from his long captivity. By his liberation the national disgrace was expunged and the son of their heroic Bruce was once more to reign over them. He had returned also to be entirely surrounded by his own loving and devoted subjects, for except a chamber-boy he brought not a single attendant with him from England. It was no wonder, therefore, if the crowds pressed upon him and in their eagerness blocked up his path as he went in procession to open his first parliament at Scone. But this ardour, which so often welcomed the approach and gladdened the heart of "the good King Robert," was most distasteful to his degenerate son; and snatching a mace from one of his attendants, he threatened to fell to the earth the first man who approached him unsummoned. The crowds recoiled at this churlish demonstration, and it must have been with a sudden chill of disappointed loyalty and hope. By that one act David had taught them how little he valued their devotedness, and how independent of national sympathy he was likely to continue his rule.¹

After this unkingly behaviour to his subjects David and his parliament opened their proceedings by a consideration of the means for the payment of the royal ransom. It was one of those financial difficulties which, at all times more trying to Scotland than war and invasion in their worst forms, was especially perplexing at the present crisis. The sum was so enormous that even at its most prosperous period Scotland could scarcely have raised it. But the country was now impoverished by its long war, by the ransom of its knights and nobles taken at Durham, by the expensive deputations it had

repeatedly sent to England to treat for the deliverance of the king; it had also incurred a fresh expense in the maintenance of so many noble hostages in England who were given as sureties for the observance of the late treaty. The means adopted for the liquidation of the royal ransom were in keeping with the urgency of the debt and the poverty of the country. All the wool and woofels of the kingdom were set apart for the purpose; all landed property was to be taxed according to its value or rental; and every tradesman and mechanic was assessed according to the value of his property, besides what he was pleased to contribute of his own free-will. All lands and every rent and custom that had pertained to the crown were to be resumed. The whole kingdom was laid under a process of rack-rent or distraining; and while officers were stationed on the marches to intercept every excisable article that might be smuggled across the Border, every inland county and parish was furnished with its officers and tax-gatherers, who took account of every article of property and levied the impost to which it was liable. Such were the principal expedients which the present parliament adopted for the removal or at least the lightening of the millstone that hung round its neck. It must soon have been found that the purses of the laity were inadequate of themselves to the greatness of the demand, and David was obliged to have recourse to the liberality of the church. This he was the more encouraged to do as in the late treaty the bishops, having obtained the consent of their chapters, had bound themselves and all the clergy to contribute their share of the ransom. For this alienation, however, of the ecclesiastical revenues the consent of the pope was necessary, and David applied to him for a ratification of the engagement entered into by the

¹ Wyntoun, b. viii. c. 43.

Scottish bishops. But the pontiff, upon the plea that this obligation was subversive of the interests of religion and the church, peremptorily refused his assent.¹ Yet in the following year he appears to have relented, for on a subsequent application he granted a tenth of the ecclesiastical revenues of Scotland towards the payment of the debt, but on the express condition that it should not be exacted beyond the term of three years.² This was deemed a wonderful stretch of liberality; and, furnished with the papal bulls, the Scottish ambassadors returned home in triumph.

As France had benefited so greatly by the disasters of Scotland her aid was reasonably expected by the latter in return, and there was accordingly a meeting of plenipotentiaries of both kingdoms upon the subject of King David's ransom. The Scots on this occasion represented that their sovereign, while a prisoner, might have obtained his liberty and procured peace for the country by renouncing his alliance with France, but had rejected the offer; and that he had engaged to pay so large a ransom in full confidence of French assistance in discharging it. As yet, it was added, only the first instalment of ten thousand marks had been paid, and that until the whole was defrayed the hostages could not be recovered nor war resumed. To renew hostilities with England they were both able and willing, provided France would aid them in paying the ransom before the term appointed; and if this were done they would commence the war instantly, and without demanding the auxiliary French forces which the latter power, by treaty, had bound itself to furnish. These were tempting offers; but France was scarcely in better plight than Scotland herself, her king being a prisoner in London and her fields devastated by a ruinous war. This the French plenipotentiaries represented as the reason of their inability to contribute in money; but if the Scots commenced hostilities they vaguely alleged that they would aid them according to their power. But further consideration at last induced them to give a more decisive answer; and they agreed to the payment of fifty thousand marks sterling to the Scots on condition that the latter should renew the war with England. The old alliance between France and Scotland was also ratified anew.³ But this gleam of promised aid proved fallacious, for France forgot her engagements; the stipulated sum was never paid; and the Scots, after having

compromised themselves with England, were left by their perfidious allies to their poverty and their besetting difficulties.

It was perhaps as fortunate in the meantime for Scotland that this prospect of the renewal of war was not realized, and that the country had time to repose and gather strength. For David's captivity of eleven long years had not taught him wisdom, and his return to his kingdom had not abated the mutual feuds of his nobles nor induced them to act in concert. With such a king and such leaders it was better that there should be peace with England at any price short of the national independence—the very price, be it noted, which Edward III. meant to exact for his unusually pacific forbearance. He had tried force and found it unavailing, and he was now endeavouring to conquer Scotland by an insidious policy through which its national spirit should be slowly wasted and its strength silently undermined. He had already acquired that ascendancy over David which a strong commanding mind gains over a weak one. He was tampering with the young Scottish hostages, who were allured by the renown of his martial achievements, and fitting them for his future purposes. He was encouraging his beloved brother-in-law the King of Scotland, his sister the queen, and the chief Scottish nobility to make visits to England under the pretext of negotiations for the welfare of both realms, and treating them on their arrival with such courtesy and kindness as to set their national jealousies asleep. In this way the Scottish aristocracy, with their king at their head, were in danger of becoming what they had originally been—more English than Scotch, and more Norman than either, having no country except where their lands lay or where their prospects were most promising. But while Edward was thus securing the heads and leaders of the nation the people were not lost sight of, and the liberal concessions which he made would have been worthy of the highest commendations but for the purposes in which they originated. Thus he threw open to the Scottish merchants the profitable trade with England, and granted them such protections and immunities as no other English sovereign would have bestowed. He afforded every facility to the Scottish youths who wished to obtain an education superior to that which their own country could bestow, and they received letters of safe-conduct to the universities of Cambridge and Oxford, instead of being obliged to repair to the colleges of France and Germany. Even those English shrines which were the resorts of common worship were made free to Scottish pilgrims, and the peaceful bands of northern devotees might re-

¹ Robertson's *Parliamentary Records*, pp. 96-7; *Fæd.* vi. 89-90.

² *Scotichron.* xiv. 21.

³ *Scotichron.*; MS. copy of the treaty in the Advocates' Library, Edinburgh.

pair to them without molestation or danger. It was well that national asperities should be thus softened down and a mutual intercourse of two neighbouring nations promoted; but who does not see that such an intercourse must have ended in the few being absorbed by the many, the weak overcome by the strong? It would have been a conquest of absorption, not a union of interfusion, and as such the Scottish patriots opposed it and were ready to prefer to it the dangerous alternative of war. At the head of these was Robert the Steward, whose patriotism was sharpened by his interests, and in his opposition to the concessions of the childless David he was contending for the independence of a sceptre which himself and his posterity were destined to wield.

Being for the present freed from all apprehension of Scottish interference, Edward III. resumed his continental aggressions, and passed over to Calais with an army of 100,000 men, among whom were several Scottish knights who gladly followed his banner. But if they hoped to win either spoil or glory under such a redoubted leader they were on this occasion disappointed; for after a short and useless campaign an agreement, called the Treaty of Renunciation, was made between France and England. One of its conditions was of peculiar significance to Scotland. It was, that the king of France and his successors "shall, as much as may be done, forsake, and altogether depart from the alliances which they have with the Scots," and shall not "give or lend to the King of Scotland, or to the subjects thereof, present or to come, any aid, favour, or comfort against the said King of England, or against his heirs or successors, or against his realm or subjects in any sort; and that they shall not make any alliances with the said Scots against the said King of England and realm of England, in time to come."¹ In this way the French, when the season of danger was over, abandoned their faithful allies to the tender mercies of the English king. But this shameful abandonment was not gratuitous, for Edward on his part agreed to abandon to the wrath of France the Flemings, whose cause he had hitherto supported, and by whose aid he had signally profited during the whole course of the French war.² Thus two brave nations, struggling for their respective rights, were sacrificed to the interests of those rival kings through whose mutual contention they had sought to work out their own deliverance.

It is not probable that a treaty so favourable

to the views of the English king upon Scotland would be viewed by David with much hostility or dislike. But in the same year (1360) a private and personal affliction revenged his indifference to the national welfare. While a prisoner in England he had maintained an adulterous intercourse with Catherine Mortimer, a native of Wales; and on returning to Scotland he brought her with him, and established her as his favourite mistress. But she experienced the usual fate of a royal mistress in having arrayed against her the jealousy and hatred of the nobles; and these magnates were neither slow nor scrupulous in the mode of manifesting their hatred. Two of their creatures, named Hulle and Dewar, repaired to her residence under the pretext of being royal messengers commissioned to escort her to the king's presence, and the unsuspecting Catherine committed herself to their guidance. They rode along until they reached a desolate moor between Melrose and Soutra, and there the villains murdered her. The body on being found was interred by the afflicted king in the chapel of the Abbey of Newbattle, and the Earl of Angus, a turbulent profligate man, who was suspected of being the instigator of the murder, was thrown into prison in the castle of Dumbarton, where he soon after died of the plague.³

This terrible visitation of pestilence, which had swept over Scotland with such deadly effect in 1349, renewed its ravages in 1361, and on this occasion with greater violence than ever; for while on the former it had been exclusively confined to the lower ranks, it now attacked all classes alike. Alarmed at the virulence of the contagion and its wasteful havoc, the king and many of the nobility retired to the northern part of the kingdom, and made their residence at Kinloss, in Morayshire. During this recess, however, David was not wholly idle; for, excited by some cause of resentment which the historian has not specified, he quarrelled with the Earl of Mar, besieged him in his castle of Kildrummy, which he reduced, and placed in it a garrison of his own.⁴

Amidst these external changes of such trivial importance, and so little accounted of in history, a strong undercurrent was silently at work, by which the national independence was to be transferred to the control of England. The unwonted peace that had prevailed since the return of David from captivity, the mercantile intercourse between England and Scotland, by which the poorer country had been enriched, and the social meetings that were frequent between the two peoples, had tended to abate the

¹ Barnes' *History of King Edward III.*

² Rymer, *Fœdera*, vi. 192.

³ *Scotichron.* l. xiv. c. 24.

⁴ *Ibid.*

hostile feelings and lull the suspicions of the Scots. The splendid court of Edward III. and the chivalrous character of its nobles were equally alluring to the Scottish barons and prelates who visited it either for pleasure or political negotiation; and as these visits were frequent, the desirableness of assimilating the two countries more closely together was a feeling extended more widely, and impressed more deeply, with every successive mission. Edward III. and David his willing vassal were thus drifted onward by a favourable tide that needed neither sail nor oar; and with a very few years more of patient endurance it seemed as if their mark would be attained. But thus passively to wait seemed neither to suit the eager ambition of the English king nor the rashness of him of Scotland, while circumstances had also occurred which must have made the instant settlement of their mutual project more desirable than ever. In 1362 David's queen, Joanna, the makepeace of both kingdoms, died at Hertford Castle in England; and thus that country as well as Scotland was freed from an unwelcome remembrancer, whose presence spoke of an event that was displeasing to both. On the year following Edward Baliol sickened and died at Doncaster, and with him perished the last of the rivals to the house of Bruce.¹ The English king may have felt misgivings that under a longer delay David, now a widower, might take to himself a new mate, and become the father of an heir to the Scottish throne; while David himself, still without a son, and who would have had even a Baliol rather than the Steward to succeed him, now saw that the royal succession was becoming every year more confirmed in favour of Robert, whom, since the battle of Durham, he had hated with a royal and rival hatred. To such considerations we may reasonably trace the eagerness with which Edward III. now desired a final settlement of Scottish affairs, and the readiness with which David assented to his wishes.

Under this ill-advised haste the Scottish parliament was summoned at Scone in March 4th (1363), and there the king propounded the measure which for years he had cherished within his heart. It was, that should he die without male issue they would choose, not a native, but an Englishman for their sovereign. He suggested to them Lionel, Duke of Clarence, the third son of the English king, as the worthiest of their choice, as he who could best defend their national liberties and maintain the public tranquillity; and should they consent he assured them that, in return, King Edward would aban-

don for himself and his heirs for ever all claims and pretensions to the sovereignty of Scotland. The parliament was astounded. Was this to be the end of threescore years of struggle and suffering? Was it for this that they had purchased the freedom of their king? And had they lived to hear such a proposal made by the son of the victor of Bannockburn? The mask was not merely removed but insultingly flung in their faces. With one voice, a voice of indignant thunder, the three estates cried, "No, we never will permit an Englishman to reign over us!" They reminded the king of the act of settlement made in the days of Robert Bruce, and ratified by the solemn oaths of the Scottish parliament, appointing his son-in-law presumptive heir of the crown; and they declared that the Steward and his sons were brave men, and worthy to rule over them.² This fierce decision, given by all and each without a moment's hesitation or counsel, was enough, and David was fain to escape by calling their attention to other matters.³ But the words he had uttered he could not revoke, and they had roused the unsuspecting spirit of the nation to a sense of its danger. All therefore who loved their country, independent of sordid or party considerations, all who were devoted as political partisans to the cause of the Steward and his family, all whom personal injury and feud had made the hereditary enemies of England, all whose dogged pride was of such a national cast that they would not only have rejected the sway of an English ruler, but even the worship of an English saint—these parties of many minds, however separated or opposed, had now a common bond of union, of which Robert the Steward was recognized as the representative and head. A combination was accordingly formed of the principal nobles and barons to guard the established succession, at the head of which was Robert himself, his two sons, and the Earls of March and Douglas; and the bond by which they engaged to unite and stand by each other was ratified by oath and seal. Their avowed purpose was to compel the king to disclaim his proposal, or, on his refusal, to expel him; and to show that they were in earnest they raised their vassals to make their purpose good. The war which they thus commenced was conducted in their usual merciless fashion: the barons who adhered to the king were assailed in their strongholds, and the mercantile communities in their burghs; the former were dispossessed and driven out, and the latter plundered. It was a resumption of the spirit and practices of the

² *Scotichron.* l. xiv. c. 25; Wyntoun, b. viii. c. 45.

³ "Propter quod rex, ut apparuit commotus, divertit se ad alia." *Scotichron.*

¹ Walsingham; Barnes.

Bruce and Baliol warfares, although the pretexts and the watchwords were altered; but in this as in former cases it had originated in English intrigue and for the purposes of English aggrandizement. The machinations of Edward III. had now divided not only the kingdom but the royal family against itself, and it only now remained to be seen whether the son or the son of the son-in-law should prove the stronger in the contest.¹

Happily for the country this war was not of long continuance. At its commencement David issued proclamations commanding the rebellious barons to desist, and on their refusal he proceeded to levy his adherents. Nor was his cause so hopeless as at first sight might have appeared; for independently of those nobles who followed him as the proper head of his family, he could calculate on the restored English lords, the supporters of Baliol, whose cause had now become identified with his own, and upon those English soldiers who still continued to garrison certain districts and castles upon the Scottish border. As he distributed large sums of money also in raising troops it may justly be supposed that in his poverty he was supplied with the sinews of war by the King of England, who had so deep an interest in the quarrel. Thus David was soon at the head of an army that completely outnumbered the insurgents, upon whom he advanced with his father's alacrity and courage. This display daunted the combined lords, who proposed an accommodation; and the king, who wished to recover the popularity he had lost by his impolitic proceeding, was equally ready to listen. As peace was so much for the interest of both parties the terms were quickly settled, and apparently to their mutual satisfaction. By these the nobles cancelled their bond of union, and renewed their oaths of allegiance, while the Steward swore to be an obedient and faithful liegeman to the king in all time to come, on pain of forfeiting his title to the crown, his right to his lands and possessions, and of being esteemed a perjured man and a false dishonoured knight.² By this one instance of moral courage, wisdom, and enterprise, which stands alone in the whole course of the reign of David II., a rebellion that might have dethroned him was appeased, and the misery of a civil war averted.

This wise and kingly deed, however, was not without its foil and contrast; and during the same year—perhaps at the very period when he thus secured his tottering throne—he again placed it in jeopardy by sharing it with a most unsuitable partner. This was in consequence of

his marriage with Margaret Logie, a woman described by the old historian as being more distinguished for beauty than womanly virtues.³ But be her character what it might, she was an unmeet successor to Joanna, the sister of the King of England, being either the daughter or the widow of Sir John de Logie, one of the inferior Scottish barons. The Steward and his family were chagrined at a step by which their succession might be thwarted, while the proud nobles were indignant that one of an inferior order was thus raised above them, who might become the mother of a race of princes. The rancour thus raised anew was speedily manifested by the Steward, and his son Alexander Lord of Badenoch, being cast into prison, and by the king's impatience to visit England, which he did, accompanied by his beautiful bride, under the pretext of making a religious pilgrimage to Walsingham. Strong, indeed, must have been the motive that drove him from his offended nobles into the arms of Edward III.; for the most part of his ransom was still unpaid, and by visiting England he might at any time be recommitted to his old lodging in the Tower. But he came prepared to settle the debt which his subjects were neither able nor willing to pay, and to settle it in a way which he knew would be most satisfactory to the wishes of his royal creditor. The shameful compact between the two kings on this occasion was ratified by their selected privy counsellors at Westminster in November (1363), and its stipulations are fully characteristic of the ambitious yet cunning and cautious spirit of Edward III., as well as the selfish, unpatriotic character of David and his adherents who assented to them. They were in substance to the following effect:—

In the event of the King of Scots dying without male issue, the King of England for the time being was to succeed to the throne of Scotland. The name and title, however, of the kingdom of Scotland was to be preserved with due honour and proper distinctions, no union or annexation being made with England; and in all public instruments the English sovereign thus succeeding was to be distinguished by the title of "King of England and of Scotland." After having been crowned in England he was to repair to Scone, and there be crowned also King of Scotland; and the marble chair which was still retained at Westminster was to be given up to the Scots for that purpose. At his Scottish coronation the English king was to swear that he would maintain the national freedom of the church of Scotland, so that it should not be

¹ *Scotichron.* xiv. 25.

² *Ibid.* 27.

³ "Non tam bonitate virtutis femineæ, quàm voluptate formæ appetivæ." *Scotichron.* xiv. 28.

subject to any English archbishop, or foreign power whatever, except that of the pope; and that none of its bishoprics, ecclesiastical dignities, or benefices should be conferred upon any except native-born Scotchmen. He was also to pledge himself that he would maintain the laws, statutes, and usages of Scotland established by its former kings inviolate; that he would not alienate the kingdom or any part of it, but preserve it free and entire, as it was in the days of Robert Bruce; and that his only counsellors in Scottish affairs should be the peers and lords of Scotland. After these attempts to assuage the national jealousy of the Scots and reconcile them to the rule of English sovereignty the following advantages both immediate and remote, and affecting all classes, were held out as allurements. The town and castle of Berwick, and the castles of Roxburgh, Jedburgh, and Lochmaben, with the territories belonging to them, as also the English lands which Robert Bruce had held at the time of his decease, were to be restored to Scotland. No new tax whatever was to be imposed upon the people; no native was to be forced to appear in any court of law, except within the kingdom; and no one was required to give more than forty days of military service at his own proper charges. The debt still owing by the Scots for the liberation of their king was to be cancelled and the Scottish hostages set free. In commercial privileges the road to wealth was to be opened to the trading communities; for the Scottish merchants were to enjoy their own liberties in traffic, and not to be obliged to go to Calais, or any other staple town, but to pay to the general customs only half a mark for each sack of wool which they exported. Every prelate, earl, baron, and freeholder, whether ancient or new in the kingdom of Scotland, was to be left undisturbed in his privileges, lands, revenues, and offices; and every chancellor, chamberlain, justiciary, sheriff, provost, bailie, and governor of town or castle was to be exclusively a native of Scotland. The lower and middle classes being thus left untouched, or only visited with benefits and grateful prospects, and the upper ranks confirmed in their hitherto insecure possessions, the great leaders of the nation were to be propitiated, or those from whom resistance was chiefly apprehended were to be purchased with a price correspondent to their importance; and accordingly this necessary precaution was by no means neglected. David himself was to be put in possession of the greatest part of the lands and rents which his ancestors held in England, and an equivalent for the rest, and to perform service for these lands alone to the English king. The powerful Earl of Douglas was to be restored

to the English estates that were claimed by his father or uncle, or receive a complete equivalent. Full satisfaction was also to be made by the King of England to the Earl of Athole, the lords Beaumont, Percy, and Ferrers, to the heirs of Sir Richard Talbot, to all the disinherited or dispossessed barons who laid claim to lands in Scotland since David became a prisoner or otherwise—and this satisfaction was to be made in such a manner that the present actual possessors of these lands should enjoy them without challenge and transmit them undisturbed to their heirs.

These, indeed, were large and tempting promises, but the price demanded in return was the power of breaking them at pleasure. And would Edward III. have continued to fulfil them when the purpose which they were designed to effect had been secured? It was so iniquitous a bargain that a breach of it would have added very little to its criminality. And had Scotland been thus delivered into such unscrupulous hands, how soon and how arbitrarily its resources might have been tasked, either for foreign conquests in which the country had no interest or for the establishment of a regal despotism in England that would have been fatal to both kingdoms alike! But, above all, what shall we think of the meanness of David, who seems to have cherished this prospect for years and to have entered with alacrity into the bargain? To him the freedom of his country and the glory of his father were a nullity. To gratify his vindictiveness against the Steward he sacrificed the rights of the family of his sister Marjory; and for an inglorious peace or enjoyment that could last during his own life only he renounced the royal claims that might descend to the children of his own daughters, failing the line of his elder sister. Let him but live and reign; let him but reign for the sensual indulgences of royalty, and for this he is content to sacrifice his father's house and his own. It would have been a thousandfold better for him if, like John of France, his late fellow-captive, he had declared his inability to discharge the conditions of his deliverance, and returned of his own accord to the Tower. But relieved of a load and jocund of heart, he returned to Scotland, and was received with welcome by those faithful subjects who, had they known the secret treaty by which they were bought and sold, would have chased him back across the Border, or even torn him to pieces. So carefully, indeed, was it concealed that it remained unknown not only to the country at large, but even to our earliest historians; and it was not until after the more honourable and propitious union of the two kingdoms under James VI.

that a copy of the agreement was found among the old archives of London and published for the first time to the world.¹ By one article David agreed to sound the inclinations of his subjects upon the treaty and advertise Edward and his council of the result fifteen days after the ensuing Easter; but from the utter silence of history respecting any meeting of the Scottish parliament, or even council, for such a purpose, we may conclude that David lost heart and did not venture the trial. In this way the conspiracy was useless to both kings, except in so far as it made the one a more subservient tool and the other a less urgent creditor.

During this season of treachery almost unexampled in the history of nations, in which the sovereign was conspiring against the rights and privileges of his own throne in behalf of a rival power, it was well that the country was disposed for peace, and ready to maintain it by just and reasonable concessions. Although not aware of the amount of his duplicity the Scots must already have marked, on more than one occasion, the subserviency of their sovereign to the interests of England; and in the event of a war they might well fear to commit the issue of the struggle to such a questionable leader. In the parliament, therefore, which met in the beginning of 1364 the great question was the transformation of the present truce into a permanent peace; and to obtain this they declared themselves ready to replace the disinherited lords, Athole, Talbot, Percy, Beaumont, Ferrers, and Ross into their Scottish possessions, and to invest the youngest son of Edward III. with the lands of Galloway that had belonged to Edward Baliol, and with the Isle of Man. For the establishment of the English rule in Ireland they would also invade that island as the allies of England, with an army headed by their king. These liberal concessions they were ready to offer in lieu of the royal ransom, which pressed heavily upon them, and which of late had fallen in arrear. And should even these concessions not be deemed sufficient they were ready to supplement them with a money payment also, a moderate deduction being made in the amount in consideration of what was already offered.² All this they expressed themselves ready to give as the price of a perpetual peace and alliance between the two nations upon such terms as should in no way compromise the freedom and independence of Scotland. In the event of these terms being rejected the payment of the ransom in full was the next subject of consideration; and here the integrity, energy, and self-denial of the Scottish

parliament were worthy of admiration. All they would demand in this case of England was a truce for a certain limited period until the whole sum could be paid by yearly instalments. As for the great difficulty of raising the money, this was also deliberately encountered by the proposal of an annual tax upon the whole wool of the kingdom, and another upon all persons in the kingdom to the amount of six pennies in the pound. In this way ten thousand marks per annum would be raised, and the debt discharged in ten years. The result of these deliberations and proposals was an interim truce of four years between the two kingdoms for the adjustment of the terms of a final and lasting peace, the ransom still continuing to be paid by fixed instalments; and should either country be inclined to go to war before the truce had expired a due notice to that effect was to be given six months before the commencement of hostilities.

An interval of repose was thus secured for Scotland, and it now remained to be seen whether the result was to be for evil or for good. On the one hand was the kingdom exhausted with its efforts and impoverished with its debts, and to which every moment of rest was a welcome opportunity for revival; but on the other was the King of England waiting the time when his victim should be lulled into sleep and bound without resistance. And all was going silently, blandly onward. Brought by peace into closer contact with England than ever it had been by war and invasion, the country, along with the blessings of repose, was gradually recovering its former prosperity as well as acquiring the principles of a higher civilization; its merchants found the English ports open to their traffic, and its scholars the halls of learning to their researches; and that frank interchange of friendship had already commenced between the two nations which is so congenial as well as so natural to two gallant enemies after they have proved each other's strength in an unflinching chivalrous combat. But even from this intercourse which Edward so carefully promoted, there also accrued the evil and the danger which he appears to have calculated upon. The Scottish lords whose sons were hostages to the King of England became frequent visitors to his court, where they soon acquired English habits and anti-national prejudices. Those nobles who had no such motive for journeying were allured by the splendour of English tournaments or the fashionable promenades of English shrines, and were in the frequent practice of journeying southward with costly trains, either as religious pilgrims or gallant knight-adventurers. And the most frequent of

¹ *Fæd. Ang.* vol. vi. p. 427.

² Robertson's *Parliamentary Records*.

these tourists was David himself, who, with his queen, made such repeated pilgrimages to the shrine of St. Thomas of Canterbury and the court of London, that England rather than his own kingdom had become his principal home. Such journeyings, also, could not be made without money, or such competitions with the far wealthier nobles of England without incurring heavy debt; and the Scottish barons after impoverishing their own country often involved themselves in such serious pecuniary difficulties in England that little remedy was left them unless they set their patriotism to sale. Even David and his queen Margaret could not venture into England without a safe-conduct that protected both himself and his establishment from arrest. On these accounts a large portion of the Scottish nobility, besides their sovereign, were bound to England either by the blandishments of Edward or the sums which they owed to his subjects, and from the consequences of which his power was necessary for their protection.

In the meantime Edward, who watched the current of events, seems to have thought too prematurely that Scotland was his own, and was at no pains to conceal his exultation. Of this he gave evidence by withholding the royal title from David, styling him in letters of protection, "our dear brother and prisoner," while Robert Bruce himself he designated as him "who had pretended to be King of Scotland." But the people at large, and the best of the nobles, were neither to be seduced nor subdued, while the arrogance of Edward and the defections of their countrymen only made them doubly watchful over the national independence. Of this they gave proof by their solicitude for the discharge of their king's ransom rather than that it should become the pledge and price of concession; and by the sacrifices they were ready to incur that it should be discharged in four years rather than be postponed to a later term. So earnest, indeed, were these demonstrations that a renewal of the war was constantly apprehended by the English, who were obliged to increase their Border array, and look well to the security of their marches. In this manner three out of the four years of truce elapsed, but with the ransom far from being reduced in the measure that had been anticipated. And the causes of this shortcoming are too distinctly to be found in the distress and distractions of the ill-fated country. The revenues of the crown had been so pillaged during the minority, and afterwards the captivity of David, that enough was not left to support the expenses of the royal establishment, and he and his queen had actually been obliged to

pawn their jewels for debt.¹ The country had been so unmercifully drained of its money to support the expensive journeys of its magnates that every tax imposed for the ransom was ineffectual. The indifference of the king to the welfare of his people, and his frequent absences from the country, made many of the chief nobility reckless, arrogant, and despotic, so that they felt more gratification in ruling as kings or tyrants over their own domains than in repairing to parliament, where they might be equalled or eclipsed. Of these proud absentees the Earl of Douglas and the Earl of March, the two lords of highest influence in Scotland, are particularly specified. But worse than these were the open rebellions and the turbulent feuds of others—John, Lord of the Isles, Gillespie Campbell, and John of Lorn—against whom royal proclamations had to be issued, and the country put in a state of defence. Fifty-six thousand marks of the ransom were still unpaid, and in the present condition of things there was little prospect of the means of liquidation, when an unexpected event interposed in behalf of Scotland, and cut the knot which it could not untie. This was the commencement of a new war between France and England, in which Edward was likely to find in the famous Du Guesclin an antagonist over whom another Crecy was not likely to be won; and the English king in so difficult a trial, which soon wearied his utmost strength, perceived the necessity of being at peace with the Scots. He therefore quitted his imperious tone, and abated the urgency of his demand for payment. He no longer talked of suzerainty or dismemberment, but negotiated with Scotland as a free and independent power; and the terms were a renewal of the truce for fourteen years, and the payment of the ransom during this interval by easy instalments of 4000 marks annually. Thus the country was able to breathe once more, and look forward without disquietude. A short time also previous to this event the rebellious John of the Isles and his wild Highland chieftainry had been reduced to peace and submission. The task of subduing them, which had first been committed to the Steward, had proved a failure, and David, roused to unwonted activity, had undertaken an expedition in person. It was in the depth of winter, when such an arrival could have been least expected; and he followed the chase with such vigour that John and his adherents were glad to yield and give hostages for their future obedience.² He is said on this occasion to have

¹ *Rotuli Scotiæ* in An. 1365.

² Robertson's *Parliamentary Records*, p. 115.

adopted an unscrupulous plan by which his enemies should be reduced through their mutual dissension, and for this purpose had offered rewards to every chieftain who would deliver to him one of his brother chiefs either dead or a captive. This policy, we are told, was more effectual than his arms; the whole coalition was immediately divided, and each sought the destruction of his fellow.¹ It was perhaps the germ of that more artful scheme practised upon the clan Kay and clan Quhele, little more than twenty years later, when thirty of the fiercest champions of either tribe were induced to fight to the death before Robert III. and his court until almost the whole had perished.

After the king's return a parliament was held at Perth, where two difficulties were brought under the consideration of the estates for adjustment. These were the expenses of the royal household and the administration of justice throughout the kingdom. From the brief and imperfect notices of this meeting we can easily trace the still continuing ignorance of the Scots in legislation, and their reluctance to encounter its study or its perplexities. Such, indeed, was natural to men unaccustomed to calm discussion, and who had been wont to settle every trying question by the arguments of brute force and the wager of battle. A new expedient had therefore been devised and was ratified in the present parliament, by which the attendance of members was dispensed with on their choosing certain barons and prelates to represent them. By this device, the expedient of a rude and ignorant age, what should have been a great national meeting was reduced to a committee of six ecclesiastics, fourteen barons, and seven burgesses, who upon the present occasion were authorized to deliberate and decide upon every judicial question. But independently of this general committee a special one was also chosen from which the popular element was carefully excluded, as it only consisted of six of the clergy and eleven of the barons, with such additional members as the king might be pleased to appoint; and their office was to manage those secret and special affairs which were not to be communicated to the parliament at large. The fruits of such a close and exclusive measure were soon apparent in the proceedings of this remarkable Scottish parliament of 1369. By a brief proclamation all the king's debts which he had contracted up to the previous year were declared to be cancelled. For the time to come the Highland districts which had been reduced to submission were to be taxed as well as the Lowlands for the expenses of the royal house-

hold and the administration of government. No native or foreigner was to carry any gold or silver besides his travelling expenses out of the kingdom but by paying a tax of forty pence upon every pound; and the same amount was to be levied upon the value of every exported horse and twelve pence in the pound for every other animal, while a penalty of twenty shillings for each penny of the tax was to be imposed upon every one who attempted to elude it. As loud complaints had also been made of the iniquitous extortions of the officers of the crown in levying the taxes and royal dues, all those functionaries who had held office since the king's captivity were ordered to appear before parliament on a certain day previous to its close to answer these complaints, and such as were found guilty were visited with deprivation of office and imprisonment. Other enactments, however, of a more just and disinterested character redeemed in some small degree the proceedings of this meeting. All late grants by which any persons were exempted from bearing their share in public burdens and their dues in royal service were revoked. No justiciary, sheriff, or officer of the king was to execute any order, whether under the great seal, privy seal, or signet, if it was opposed to the established law, but was to indorse or note the order on presentation, and in that form return it.²

These legislative cares, such as they were, did not constitute the only royal troubles at this period of David's changeful history. During the same year he divorced his queen, the beautiful Margaret Logie. Of this fair and unfortunate woman we know little, and that little is not of a character to excite our sympathy or regard. Although of comparatively humble birth she seems to have possessed a more than ordinary share of queenly extravagance; and when she appears, which is but in glimpses, it is as a royal pilgrim bound to England with a gay train of knights and cavaliers. What was her precise offence we know not, but it is not impossible that her husband may have found his own enjoyments curtailed and his money perplexities largely increased by these festive and ill-seasoned journeys. She seems also to have intermeddled too deeply with state affairs; and the imprisonment of the Steward and his three sons, John, Robert, and Alexander, is said to have been the effect of her suggestions. David applied to the Scottish bishops for a divorce, which they granted; but the unqueened lady, collecting all her treasures on board a vessel in the Forth, escaped from the country to France that she might carry her appeal

¹ *Scotichron.* xiv. c. 34.

² Robertson's *Parliamentary Records*; *Statuta David II.*

against the sentence of the Scottish Church to the papal court, at that time residing at Avignon. Urban V., who was then pope, appears to have given her case a favourable hearing, although envoys from the King of Scotland were sent to justify the divorce. It may have been that the proceedings of the Scottish bishops were informal, as no criminal charge worthy of divorce has been rumoured against her reputation, and it is added that the papal court were so greatly prepossessed in her behalf that Scotland was threatened with an interdict. But the death of David, which occurred on the following year, and that of Margaret two or three years afterwards while on a journey to Rome, arrested all further proceedings. One good effect of her disgrace and departure from Scotland was the instant liberation of the Steward and his sons and their restoration to the royal favour.¹

As yet David was in the prime of life, and might, in ordinary reckoning, have expected years of fresh enjoyment. But he appears to have been already a sated voluptuary who had tried every pleasure and experienced the worthlessness of them all. He was now going to change his life for the better by warring with the infidels in Palestine and dying within the shadow of the Holy Sepulchre, while his knights and nobles, who did not understand these mortal symptoms, were rejoicing in the hope of such an adventure and beginning to prepare for the enterprise.² But such resolutions were the usual resource of royal and princely sinners of the age to atone for past transgressions or make amends for lost opportunities—the deathbed repentance of chivalry after the last carnal fight had been fought out and Christian blood been

shed to the uttermost. In the midst of these pious resolves David was seized with a mortal illness, of which he died in the castle of Edinburgh on the 22d of February, 1371. At his death he was in the forty-seventh year of his age and forty-first of his reign, during only sixteen years of which he had really sat upon the Scottish throne. It was not singular that his reign should have been unprosperous, surrounded as he was by difficulties under which the highest prudence and courage must occasionally have succumbed. But in no case do we find him contending gallantly against these difficulties, or sinking, sword in hand, beneath them, as a brave and good king would have done when all effort was exhausted and resistance unavailing. Instead of this he freely welcomed them, made common cause with them, and was their most effective auxiliary. It will not excuse his unnational character to allege, that as his boyhood and youth had been spent in France, and the greater part of his more advanced years in England, he could have little feeling in common with Scotland. These obstacles a king and the son of a hero might have surmounted and gathered fresh strength from their resistance. But his selfish epicurism, in which he indulged at the expense of his impoverished country, the readiness with which he sold it to increase his exhausted resources, his unkingly debts and more unkingly liability to arrest, evince a sordidness of spirit that strips epicurism of its meretricious gilding and its votary of palliation or excuse. Could not even such a heart feel shame or compunction when the memory of his father flitted like a reproachful shade before him? We gladly turn away from such a sovereign to contemplate the noble bearing of the country which he misruled and so basely attempted to ruin.

¹ *Scotichron.* l. xiv. c. 34.

² *Ibid.*

CHAPTER IV.

REIGN OF ROBERT II. (1371-1390.)

Accession of Robert II. to the throne—His numerous family—His right of succession contested by the Earl of Douglas—Involuntary peace between England and Scotland—Measures of Robert II. to prevent a contested succession—War breaks out on the Borders—Skirmishes—Ridiculous discomfiture of the Earl of Northumberland—Unexpected capture of Berwick by the Scots—Its recovery by the English—Victory of the Scots near Melrose—Invasions and counter-invasions—Defeat of the English near the Solway—The Duke of Lancaster establishes a truce—His hospitable treatment in Scotland—War renewed at the instigation of France—Fruitless invasion of Scotland by the Duke of Lancaster—The Scots retaliate by invading England—French reinforcements arrive in Scotland—Their reception—Causes of the dislike of the Scots to their French allies—They jointly invade England—Military laws for their mutual agreement—Success of their inroad into England—Richard II. invades Scotland—His immense army—The Scots avoid an encounter and invade England—Proceedings and results of these Scottish and English invasions—Rapid recovery of Scotland from the havoc—The French allies obliged to compound for leave to quit Scotland—Successful invasion of the Scots into Cumberland—An old English charter—William Douglas, Lord of Nithsdale—His romantic history—His expedition to Ireland—His victory at Carlingford—His successful return to Scotland—An invasion into England planned—The design revealed to the English—Detection of one of their spies—Plan of the invasion changed in consequence—Advance of James, Earl of Douglas, into Durham—Its destructive progress—Encounter between Douglas and Hotspur at Newcastle—Encampment of the Scots at Otterburn—Hotspur's attack—Battle of Otterburn—Valour and Death of Earl Douglas—Signal victory of the Scots—Character and results of this conflict—Advance of the Bishop of Durham to Otterburn—He retreats without battle—Growing indolence of Robert II.—Robert, Earl of Fife, appointed Regent—Insults of the Earl of Nottingham against the Scots—The Scots cross the Border and defy him to battle—He refuses the challenge—Death of Robert II.

By the death of David II. the succession of the new dynasty to the throne of Scotland was secured, and Robert, the seventh who had held the office of high-steward, succeeded, as the grandson of Robert Bruce and the heir appointed by the consent and decree of parliament. It was indeed by a narrow chance that the line of the great national hero had been even thus indirectly perpetuated, as Robert Steward was the only child of Walter and his wife Marjory Bruce; but there was little prospect of any such failure for the future, as the new sovereign was father of five sons and seven daughters born in wedlock, while by the marriages of his daughters he had for sons-in-law the most powerful nobles of the kingdom. In addition to this numerous family, that apparently made the evil of a disputed succession impossible, his throne was guarded by eight illegitimate sons, who had now reached the age of manhood, and who, notwithstanding the stain of their birth, were able to take their place among the noble and influential of the land. The early life of Robert had been spent in trials and difficulties, but in these his bold bearing and wise intrepid conduct had won for him the national confidence, and fitted him for the task of ruling so divided a kingdom; moreover, his commanding stature, added to his high military reputation, ensured the respect of his subjects; while his affable address, and his courtesy to the meanest of the people, made him popular throughout the country. Such

was the character of Robert II. at his accession. But to these advantages there were contrasts, which his elevation only served to bring into full relief. He had now reached the age of fifty-five, a period when activity and enterprise are cooled, and when those who have been renowned in their day must give place to younger men. A premature life of action, which had commenced at the age of eighteen, seems to have produced as premature a desire for repose, so that he mingled less with public events than he had hitherto done, and was blamed for preferring to live in retirement and inactivity. The state of the kingdom, however, assuredly required a cautious, temperate, and forbearing ruler; and the apparent slothfulness of Robert may have been little more than that needful withdrawal from strife which the politics of the age was little able to appreciate. A physical defect also, that must have grown with his years, may have deepened such a tendency to inaction and solitude. This was an inflammation in his eyes, to which light and active exertion must have been painful, and of which the appearance must have been disagreeable to the beholders. Froissart, who visited his court, describes the king as having one of his eyes turned up and red in colour, like sandal-wood. Such a malady was enough to produce in a palace the same effects which it would occasion in any humble dwelling.¹

¹ From this defect Robert II. acquired from his subjects

Indefeasible though the right of Robert appeared to the succession it did not pass unquestioned, and another competitor started up in the person of William, Earl of Douglas. This brother-in-arms of the Steward being at Linlithgow at the time of David's death denied before the estates there assembled the right of Robert to the throne. It was a sudden and unexpected movement, and yet not more unreasonable than many such claims that had occurred in the history of the kingdom; for Douglas, through his marriage with the Countess of Mar, claimed to be successor of all the rights of the Comyn and Baliol families. But happily for the peace of the country the claim was thrown aside as hastily as it had been raised. The cause of Robert was instantly asserted by Sir Robert Erskine, keeper of the castles of Dumbarton, Edinburgh, and Stirling, who marched towards Linlithgow with a strong military array, and being joined by the Earls of March and Moray their united force persuaded Douglas to abandon his opposition. The new king was crowned at Scone on the 26th of March, 1371; John, Earl of Carrick, eldest son of Robert, and now high-steward of Scotland, was recognized by the estates as his father's heir and successor; and to propitiate Douglas the king's daughter Euphemia was bestowed in marriage upon the earl's eldest son.¹

The situation of the two rival kingdoms of England and Scotland presented at this time an unwonted appearance. It was one of mutual peace and forbearance, not, however, from amicable feelings, but a weariness that needed repose. As for Scotland, a pacific king was now upon the throne, and the truce of fourteen years was only two years old. Fifty-two thousand marks of the ransom of David were still unpaid, and to raise such a sum amidst the pressure of its poverty and its difficulties was occupation enough for the kingdom. Moreover, there was a famine in the land, so that the grain upon which it mainly depended for subsistence was obtained from England and Ireland. To renew the war would also have been the more dangerous that the English had still a hold upon the kingdom by the possession of a large part of Annandale, the town and castle of Berwick, and the castles of Roxburgh and Lochmaben.² Thus Scotland was coerced by its position and necessities, and unwilling, because unable, to go to war. But, on the other hand, the weakness of Edward III. was signally attested in his forbearance to avail himself of such an opportunity. His French campaigns

had produced nothing but profitless victories at the cost of the best blood and treasure of England. His successes had beaten the enemy into a discipline, prudence, and skill equal to his own, while their more ample resources were sufficient to turn the scale; and thus he was now losing his conquests in France as quickly as he had gained them. And while the debility of age and the despondency of failure were stealing upon him his gallant son, the Black Prince, exhausted by his ruinous campaign in Spain, was dying of a lingering and incurable disease. As for the Duke of Clarence, he too had lately died in Italy, and thus the claim which might have been made upon Scotland in favour of this prince, and the support that might have been derived from it, were removed.

Amidst all this stillness, however, of such conflicting elements there remained the tokens of the exhausted but not extinguished storm, and the promise of its renewal. This was evident from the precautions adopted by Robert II. for the establishment of the royal succession and the future protection of the kingdom. He renewed the old alliance with France, and in case of any competition for the crown of Scotland he stipulated that the French king should resist the English influence and support the choice of the Scottish estates. He agreed that his subjects should not serve in the English armies against France, in consequence of which the Scottish soldiers who had volunteered under the banner of Edward were commanded to withdraw from his service. No truce or treaty of peace also was to be ratified by either country with England, unless the other was included. This was much on the part of Robert, but here he wisely stopped short, although tempting inducements were held out by Charles V., the French king, to urge him into open hostility. By secret articles in this treaty the Scottish king was promised a sufficient sum to discharge the whole ransom, with a reinforcement of a thousand French men-at-arms and armour for five hundred Scottish knights and squires, if he would commence war against England.³ Edward III., on the other hand, still clung to his own claim to the sovereignty of Scotland by hereditary right and the cession of Edward Baliol. Thus when an instalment of David's ransom was paid at Berwick, Edward, in the quittance for the sum, omitted to give to Robert the royal title, calling him instead "the most noble and potent prince, our dear cousin of Scotland;" and when this omission was complained of Edward tetchily replied that David

in after years the appellation of Blearie, to distinguish him from the other kings of his name.

¹ *Scotichron.* xiv. 36.

² *Rotul. Scot.* vol. i. 944-965.

³ *Records of the Scottish Parliament*, An. 1371.

Bruce himself had been so designated, and was contented with the title. He subjoined, however, a declaration that the discharge should be as binding as if Robert had been termed in it King of Scotland; and with this explanation the Scots had to rest satisfied.¹

In this sullen and compulsory peace with each other the two kingdoms remained during the first six years of the reign of Robert II., an interval therefore of which history takes little notice. But that the time was neither unwisely nor unprofitably spent by the Scottish king is evident from the anxiety he displayed in placing the important subject of royal succession beyond the chances of controversy or a civil war. His eldest son, John, Earl of Carrick, was not only lame and of an inert disposition, but was still without children; and it was therefore decided in a parliament held at Scone in 1373 that, failing John and his heirs, the next in succession should be his younger brother, Robert, Earl of Fife, afterwards Duke of Albany. In the case also of this line becoming extinct the king's other legitimate sons, David, Earl of Strathearn, and Walter, Lord of Brechin, afterwards Earl of Athole, were nominated in turn as next heirs to the royal inheritance. Another object of anxiety with Robert was to maintain peace with the pontiff, which had been disturbed by the appeal of Margaret Logie, who appears to have been still alive and prosecuting her suit at the commencement of 1374. Robert in this case applied to his ally the King of France to interpose his friendly offices with the papal court at Avignon, whose decisions had been unfavourable to the Scottish Church and kingdom. This the French king promised to do, and probably kept his word, for after this period we hear no more of Margaret Logie, except that she died in a strange land.

Events in England in the meantime gave too certain indications that hostilities would be soon resumed. Edward III., whose old age had declined into dotage, expired on the 1st of June, 1377, and was succeeded by Richard II., son of the Black Prince, a boy only eleven years old, while the government of the kingdom, as was usual in such cases, fell into the hands of a turbulent and divided regency. It was an opportunity for the Scots to be up and doing to which they would scarcely be inattentive. On what side the violation of the fourteen years' truce commenced cannot be decided, neither indeed does it greatly matter in a case where both parties were equally impatient for war. And first there was a pricking to and fro upon the marches, and plundering on both sides of the

Border, although without a hostile proclamation between the kingdoms; and afterwards a more serious brawl at the fair of Roxburgh, in which a Scot was slain by the English. Had the unfortunate victim been an ordinary yeoman or burgess no account would have been taken of such an every-day chance-medley and disaster, but the man was a cubicular, or gentleman of the bed-chamber, to the powerful Earl of March, who was therefore bound to revenge the death of his domestic retainer by the uttermost of fire and sword. He first demanded redress, and that the culprits should be punished or delivered into his hands, threatening that otherwise he would pay no regard to the truce; and on receiving a contemptuous refusal he quietly prepared for vengeance. The next fair held at Roxburgh was on the feast of St. Laurence, and the English, suspecting no danger, had repaired thither in great numbers, when March, who had silently waited his time, burst at the head of an armed force into the town, set it on fire, commenced a sudden and wholesale slaughter of the English without distinction of age or sex, and after a pitiless carnage withdrew his followers laden with plunder.²

This deed was enough for a Border war without the formality of pursuivants and heralds, and the English Borderers made a fierce irruption upon the lands of Sir John Gordon. Sir John requited this visit with a counter-invasion, in which he swept the districts of his assailants, and was on his way homeward with droves of cattle and a crowd of prisoners when, before he reached the Border, he was brought to bay in a mountain pass by Sir John Lilburne with a force double in amount to his own. Undaunted by this superiority Sir John Gordon encouraged his followers, and commenced one of the most desperate conflicts of that chivalrous period. After a long and hard encounter, in which he was severely wounded, he was victorious; Lilburne and his brother were taken prisoners, and the victors, enriched with fresh booty, continued their retreat unmolested.³

This battle, or rather skirmish of Carham, was so signal a defeat of the English and so injurious to their military reputation, that the wrath of the powerful Earl of Northumberland was kindled, and he resolved by a decisive effort in person to restore the character of his county and revenge its losses. After complaining, therefore, of the broken truce and the perfidy of the Scots he advanced into their territory at the head of seven thousand men and proceeded to ravage the lands of the Earl of March, on

¹ Rymer's *Fœdera*, vi. 724, vii. 673; *Rotul. Scot.*

² *Scotichron.* xiv. 37; Wyntoun, ix. c. 1; Walsingham.

³ *Scotichron.*; Wyntoun.

which during three days he inflicted wasteful havoc. But the magnificent array of the mighty English Border potentate, a large proportion of which consisted of knights and men-at-arms, was quickly put to flight by an onset of no more formidable character than a Christmas mum-mery or school-boy frolic. The army was encamped beside a forest near Dunse; the horses were picketed in a circle round the camp under the guard of serving-men and suttlers; and knight and squire and hardy yeoman were securely reposing in the inner ring, when they were startled by an unearthly noise that might have awoken the dead. As soon as it burst upon their ears the horses broke their bridles, plunged hither and thither through the camp in the dark, and wildly fled homeward to the Border, and when morning dawned that place of encampment was a piteous scene of dismounted hoof-battered cavaliers, and broken ranks huddled together during that night of terror, and now blushing crimson that the cause of their alarm was discovered. It was nothing more than a midnight onslaught from a troop of Scottish serfs and boys, armed with the rattles made of blown bladder or skin and a few pebbles, with which they were wont to drive away the wild beasts from their cattle, but which they had now effectually used for a more important purpose! As their steeds had fled home nothing remained for their riders but to follow; and accordingly, with drooping crests and thoughts far from self-complacent, the army wended its way across the Border into England.¹

Thus war between the two countries had fully commenced, although it was not proclaimed; and several skirmishes of this period which ended favourably for the Scots had a tendency to animate their confidence and make them less desirous of peace. The plunder of England was once more open to their enterprise; the state of that country, divided with feuds and factious leaders during the minority of Richard II., encouraged their desire of aggression; and France, whose interest it especially was to lower the power of her rival, thought that this could be best accomplished through the agency of a Scottish war, and accordingly used every effort to incite it. All this, indeed, was most unwelcome to the pacific spirit of Robert II.; but had he been a king of far greater energy, still he must have yielded to the prevalent desire of his people and the warlike spirit of his turbulent nobles, who had now become too powerful to be restrained. All, therefore, that he could do was to look quietly

on and watch for the season of reaction, when he might interpose with effect, while his lords and barons were in the meantime making war upon their own account.

One of the most interesting episodes of this partisan warfare was the daring capture of Berwick by the Scots. A small army being mustered on the Scottish border under the command of the Earls of Douglas, Moray, and Mar, Alexander Ramsay, an esquire, accompanied by only forty mounted soldiers, went forth one evening from the array in quest of an adventure. On nearing Berwick he learned from a spy whom he had sent forward that there was neither water in the ditches nor guard on the walls. Encouraged by this negligence of the enemy he resolved to attempt the surprise of a town that had often baffled whole armies. At daybreak he led his small band across the neglected ditch, which was now only a moving sand, and to the top of the undefended ramparts, himself being the first man that mounted, and with the same facility they entered within the castle walls. It was only the din of their axes hewing down the door that woke the captain from sleep; but in his confusion he attempted to escape by a high window and broke his neck in the fall. The guards themselves only awoke to cry, "Treason, treason!" and be taken prisoners. Roused by the cries the governor of the town mustered a band of citizens and rushed to the castle; but it was too late, for the gates were closed and the drawbridge raised; upon which he ordered the supports of the bridge to be cut away to prevent its descent, so that none might have egress from the castle. Thus speedily were the gallant captors, who had purposed to sally out and take the town also, inclosed and imprisoned within their own conquest; and while they unsuccessfully attempted to lower the drawbridge, the chains of which snapped asunder on account of its unsupported weight, the grinning citizens and their governor exclaimed, "Oh! what!—are you there? keep where you are, for you shall not go away of a certainty without our permission!"

In the meantime the situation of Ramsay and his comrades was a warlike signal and summons to both countries, and while the Earl of Northumberland advanced with ten thousand soldiers to recover the castle, the Scots under Douglas advanced upon Berwick with equal speed to relieve their countryman and improve his success by the capture of the town. The latter, however, on finding themselves greatly outnumbered by the English, were obliged to fall back and leave Ramsay to his fate, upon which Northumberland laid siege to the castle in regular form by constructing mines and bat-

¹ *Scotichron.* xiv. 38; *Wyntoun*, ix. 2.

tering the ramparts. Poor, indeed, must have been the military science of the period that occupied ten thousand men so seriously in the recovery of a place which forty soldiers had sufficed to capture! "And never," says Froissart, "did so few men as the Scots defend themselves so well, nor was ever castle so briskly attacked; for there were ladders raised against different parts of the walls on which men-at-arms ascended with targets over their heads and fought hand-to-hand with the Scots." The result could not be otherwise than the defeat of the latter: they were overwhelmed, and all were slain except Ramsay himself, who was made prisoner by the Earl of Northumberland.¹

It was not here, however, that the expedition was to terminate. After recovering Berwick Northumberland went in quest of the Scottish army that had retreated, in the hope of bringing it to an engagement; and he sent forward an advanced party of three hundred men-at-arms and as many archers to Melrose, to obtain tidings of the enemy. On their way this band fell into an ambuscade that had been laid for them by Sir Archibald Douglas, who was a relation of Ramsay, and anxious to effect his deliverance. The English on this occasion were greatly outnumbered; but, encouraged by their redoubted leader, Sir Thomas Musgrave, whose military prowess was renowned over the whole Border, they resolved to fight it out to the uttermost. Douglas on his part prefaced the encounter by one of those solemn observances of chivalry which often before a battle imparted new spirit to the combatants: he called to him Robert and David, two sons of the king, and his own son James, on all of whom he conferred the distinction of knighthood, and the new-made knights immediately spread abroad their banners, as they were now entitled to do. The battle was fiercely contested, and for some time was doubtful, as most of the Scots, although "lusty varlets," were armed with nothing better than hunting spears, dirks, and pointed staves. At length the struggle was decided by the personal prowess of Sir Archibald Douglas. Dismounting from his horse and wielding his sword that was two ells in length, and so heavy that few could lift it from the ground, he dealt with it such terrible strokes that a man went down at every blow, and the English, who recoiled before the onset of this resistless warrior, were soon obliged to take to flight, leaving Musgrave, his son, and many of their knights and squires prisoners in their enemy's hands. On hearing of this disaster the Earl of Northumberland returned to England.²

¹ Froissart, vol. ii. c. 8.

² Froissart, vol. ii. c. 10; Wyntoun, ix. c. 2.

The tide of fortune had now shifted with its wonted capriciousness, and the English, weakened by the defection of their allies upon the Continent and by a return of the pestilence, which had not as yet exhausted its violence, were obliged to remain on the defensive. The Scots were therefore able to act as the aggressors at every point, and they did not neglect the opportunity. Their Border inroads continued to be repeated and upon a larger scale, the chief of these being one conducted by William, Earl of Douglas, with twenty thousand followers, in revenge of the late invasion of the Earl of Northumberland. He entered Cumberland and Westmoreland, swept the forest of Inglewood of forty thousand head of cattle, and burned and plundered the town of Penrith. But in this, as on a former occasion, the pestilence proved the best defence of the English, and with their plunder the Scottish army brought home the infection, which now spread over Scotland for the third time, and in the course of this year (1380) is stated in somewhat loose terms to have carried off a third part of the inhabitants. Eager for reprisals, the English of Cumberland to the number of fifteen hundred³ crossed the Solway, and commenced the usual work of burning, slaying, and pillaging. A party of Scots to the number of five hundred laid an ambush for them, and were successful: the English marched into the snare, and were unconscious of danger until the shouts of the enemy burst upon their ears and the spear-points were ringing upon their corslets. They reeled, turned, and took to flight, leaving many behind them slain or captured; and on reaching the Solway, which was now at full tide, many more were drowned in crossing the river. The old Scottish historian, who is delighted with the whole process of this surprisal, and especially with the dismaying shout of the ambush that was not given till the critical moment of onset, seems to regard it as one of the choicest feats of the war; and he shows that his countrymen had acted according to good military rule by giving a quotation from Vegetius "*De re Militari*," to the effect that the best way to conquer is to frighten your enemy before you fight with him.⁴

John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster and uncle of Richard II., who was at the head of the English government, was now anxious to establish peace between the two kingdoms. This was the more necessary for himself as he had re-

³ The *Scotichronicon*, and Wyntoun, who follows it, have raised the invaders to the number of 15,000. It is probable that a cypher too many had slipped into the original account.

⁴ *Scotichron.* I. xiv. c. 43.

solved to vindicate his right to the contested crown of Castile through his marriage with the daughter of Pedro the Cruel, but which he could not undertake without first ensuring peace at home. He accordingly crossed the Border with proposals to that effect, and to enforce them he brought a well-appointed army instead of an ambassador's train. He disbanded it, however, on the Scots expressing their readiness for peace, and on the following summer entered Scotland in peaceable guise, and ratified a truce of three years with John, Earl of Carrick, heir of the throne, and the Scottish leaders on terms that were satisfactory to both parties.¹ It was on the whole fortunate for England that such a treaty was settled; for at this period the Wat Tyler insurrection had suddenly burst out, an insurrection which, notwithstanding its lawlessness, was favourable to the growth of the national liberty, and which a Scottish war would have tended to distract or extinguish. To return to England at this juncture would have been dangerous to the Duke of Lancaster, who was so obnoxious to the insurgents that they destroyed his palace of the Savoy, regretting that its master had not shared in the ruin. But he was soon relieved from his embarrassment by the hospitable invitation of the Earl of Carrick to reside in Scotland till the rebellion was over; and the duke, escorted by Earl Douglas, and Sir Archibald, Lord of Galloway, was brought with princely honours from Haddington to Edinburgh, and lodged with all his train in the palace of Holyrood, which was set apart for his accommodation. In this manner he abode till the disturbances of his country had ended, the Scottish lords contending with each other in bestowing choice entertainments and rich gifts upon this descendant of a line of deadly enemies; and when he departed he was escorted to Berwick with a royal body-guard of eight hundred Scottish spearmen. "From that period," says Wyntoun, "he was always of good-will to Scottish men for their courtesy, and loved them right greatly."²

Had the rule of Robert II. been as energetic as his disposition was peaceful, the truce now established between England and Scotland would either have been more permanent or might have led to a lasting peace. But the new French monarch, Charles VI., was eager to resume hostilities with England; while the Scottish lords, who acted independently of their sovereign, were ready to second his efforts. To this they were incited by the tempting offers of Charles, who agreed, in the event of their

commencing a new war, to assist them with a thousand men-at-arms, a thousand suits of armour, and forty thousand franks of gold, which sum was to be distributed among themselves as the reward of their military service.³ This treaty could not escape the notice of the English, who accordingly prepared for war; and when the truce had expired the Duke of Lancaster entered Scotland with a numerous army, accompanied by a fleet laden with supplies. With more haste than prudence he advanced to Edinburgh, which his followers were eager to destroy; but the duke, mindful of the late hospitality he had experienced in the Scottish capital, not only commanded them to forbear, but encamped his army at a distance from the walls to ensure the safety of the town. In the meantime the Scots availed themselves of this generous forbearance by removing their cattle and all their substance beyond the Forth, even stripping their houses of the thatch that neither litter nor provender should be left to the enemies' horses. Thus after three days, when the English army entered Edinburgh they found nothing but the naked walls of its sorry hovels; and between destitution and the vapours of the neighbouring marshes sickness was prevalent among the English soldiers, and many of their horses died. A retreat was necessary; but no sooner had it commenced than the Scots issued from their hiding-places and harassed the retiring army with incessant skirmishes.⁴ After the invasion had been thus withdrawn the Scots prepared for reprisals by a foray into England in their usual fashion, and to this they were more especially induced by the arrival among them of several French knights and squires, whom they were eager to have as witnesses and companions of their rude but spirit-stirring and adventurous mode of Border warfare. Accordingly the Earls of Douglas and Mar, and Archibald Douglas, Lord of Galloway, at the head of 15,000 light-armed soldiers, mounted on hardy little ponies, burst into the northern counties of England, over which they moved like a destroying whirlwind, burning towns and villages, collecting booty, destroying all that they could not carry away, and giving or avoiding a meeting with their enemies at pleasure. The French chevaliers, whose stay in Scotland had been only for a few months, and who had greatly enjoyed the adventures of this new mode of campaigning, were now ready to return home; to whom the Scottish lords, at parting, said gaily, "Gentlemen, you have seen the condition and manner of our country, but you have not seen its whole

¹ Rymer's *Fœd.* vii. 312; Froissart.

² Wyntoun, ix. 4; Froissart; *Scotichron.* xiv. 46.

³ *Records of the Parliament of Scotland*, An. 1333.

⁴ Walsingham, p. 334; *Scotichron.*

strength and power. Know that Scotland is the country of the world most dreaded by the English; for we can, as you have seen, enter England at our pleasure without any danger from the sea; if we were in greater numbers we should do them more mischief than we are now able to do. Be so good, therefore, when you are in France, to tell this to your knights and squires who shall be eager for renown to excite them to come hither in search of deeds of arms. We can assure you that if we had a thousand lances from France with the good people here, we would give such a considerable blow to England that it should be visible for forty years to come. Have the goodness to remember this when you shall be on the other side of the water."¹

These representations the French warriors were not likely to forget; and on returning home they not only gave highly coloured pictures of the charms of a Scottish foray, where all was bustle and adventure, but they represented the facility with which England could be entered and assailed by the troops of France through the gate of Scotland. The result was a resolution to transfer an important part of the war to the country of their enemies, and assail them as the auxiliaries of their gallant allies the Scots. An expedition was to be made upon a large scale into Scotland; and while provisions and stores to supply the armament were collected along the coast from Harfleur to Sluys, the armourers of Picardy and Hainault were employed in forging good battle-axes for its adventurous warriors. When all was in readiness the fleet set sail from Sluys, carrying a thousand knights and esquires selected from the very flower of the French chivalry, and about as many cross-bowmen and common soldiers, the whole commanded by Jehan de Vienne, Admiral of France, the Bayard of his age and country. But besides these auxiliaries, De Vienne brought with him fourteen hundred suits of armour in order to supply the Scottish knights with a better panoply than their own country could fabricate, and fifty thousand francs of gold to be distributed among the principal Scottish nobles. So unwonted an incident as the arrival of foreign aid to Scotland, an armament so great and splendid, and the rich gifts of money and arms which it brought, ensured it a hearty welcome on its arrival in Leith in May, 1385. But this fair sunshine was quickly overcast; the French discovered that they had exchanged their own bright land for a country of gloom and tempest; and Paris, the city of well-furnished hotels and stately

palaces, for a capital that did not contain four thousand houses, and these of the meanest description. To accommodate such a crowd of illustrious strangers in so small a town was impossible, and therefore they were scattered over Dalkeith, Dunfermline, Kelso, Dunbar, and other towns and villages. To add to their uncomfortable billeting, the French, by their haughty assumptions of superiority, soon kindled the wrath of a rude and poor but proud high-spirited people; and by attempting to better their condition by living at free quarters and helping themselves to whatever they wanted quarrels arose in which several of these foreign intruders were slain. "What fiend has brought them hither?" was now the fierce question of the common people. "Or who has sent for them? Cannot we carry on our wars with England without their assistance? We shall never do any effectual good as long as they are with us. Let them be told to return again, for we are sufficiently numerous in Scotland to fight our own quarrels, and do not want their company. We neither understand their language nor they ours, and we cannot converse together. They will very soon eat up and destroy all we have in this country, and will do us more harm if we allow them to remain among us than the English could in battle. If the English do burn our houses, what consequence is it to us? we can rebuild them cheap enough, for we only require three days to do so, provided we have five or six poles and boughs to cover them." While such were the complaints of the Scots, those of the French were equally characteristic. "What could have brought us hither?" they cried to De Vienne their commander. "We have never known till now what was meant by poverty and hard living. We now have found the truth of what our fathers and mothers were used to tell us when they said, 'Go, go, thou shalt have in thy time, shouldst thou live long enough, hard beds and poor lodgings;' all this is now come to pass." John de Vienne exhorted them to patience, and to take all in good humour, representing that they could not always be at Paris, Dijon, Beaune, or Châlons, and that those who would live with honour in this world must endure both evil and good.² Meanwhile the disagreement between these ill-assorted allies still continued, and fresh causes of quarrel were daily multiplied. The grievances of the French, indeed, although so indignantly detailed by Froissart, were nothing more than what might have been expected from the condition of the country and their own injudicious conduct. When they wanted to buy horses, we

¹ Froissart.² Froissart.

are told, they were charged sixty or a hundred florins for an animal that was only worth ten; but it must be remembered that such destriers as the French knights would only condescend to use were both rare and costly articles in Scotland, however cheap and plentiful they might be in France. Their varlets also whom they sent out to forage were waylaid and killed by the inhabitants, so that a hundred of their attendants were lost in this manner; but it must be recollected, on the other hand, that the Scottish peasantry were not familiarized to those lordly exactions which the French seignors were accustomed to inflict without question in their own country, and which they seem to have transferred without scruple to the towns and villages of Scotland. It was no wonder, therefore, that their foraging parties fared so ill in using a license to which the people were unaccustomed, and in a country where the bare necessities of life were scarcely sufficient for its own inhabitants.

While the French impatiently longed for war, were it only to obtain more comfortable quarters in England, the arrival of Robert II. from the Highland border to the capital gave promise that their wish would be gratified. The king, indeed, was himself averse to hostilities; but his nine stalwart sons, by whom he was accompanied, the Scottish nobles, who were as eager for war as the French themselves, and the rich store of gold franks and mail coats which Vienne was now ready to distribute, overwhelmed the faint objections of Robert, if indeed he ventured to express them. Thirty thousand Scottish soldiers mounted upon small Galloways, which the French warriors must have eyed with wonder and sore misgiving, were mustered in the fields near Edinburgh and in readiness to assail such armies as had won the field of Crecy and stormed the ramparts of France! Bold as the bravest though he was, Vienne must have sighed at the promise of such a military spectacle, while his good knights groaned or laughed at the thought that they were to form a part of it. As so much rancour had already prevailed between the Scots and their foreign auxiliaries it was necessary, now that they were to act in concert, that they should be of a right agreement; and therefore, in addition to the established war-laws, others were framed to prevent misunderstandings and discord between the Scots and French. In proceeding to the marches there was to be no pillaging committed by either party on pain of death; the safety of all persons coming to the army to sell provisions was to be strictly respected, and everything received was to be paid for. If any man killed another he was to be instantly executed. If any common

soldier struck a gentleman he was to lose his hand or his ear. If one gentleman struck another justice was to be decided by their commanders. In any riot between the Scots and French the bystanders were instantly to arrest the offender, who, if a knight, was to lose his horse and armour, and if a common soldier, a hand or an ear. The same sharp penalties were to be inflicted on those who dislodged their companions or disordered the march. As the right of private combat was so strictly prohibited a Scot insulting a Frenchman was to be arrested by the French and brought before his Scottish officer; but if a Frenchman was the offender he was to be arraigned by the other party before his own judge. As it would have been difficult in a melee to distinguish between the warriors of three contending nations all armed in similar fashion, every Scottish and French soldier was to wear a white St. Andrew's cross both before and behind; and if the armour was white it was to be painted or embroidered upon a square or circle of black cloth. In the campaign whoever set fire to a church, killed a woman or child, or committed rape, was to forfeit, if of knightly rank, his steed and armour, and if a commoner, an ear or hand. The profit of ransom being now of almost as much account in warfare as military glory or the renown of personal prowess, and as quarrels were apt to arise from it, the rules on this head were both strict and distinct. Thus, whoever unhorsed an Englishman was to have half of his ransom. The prisoner was to be the property of that man, whether Scot or Frenchman, who received his plighted hand; if taken from him his captain was to order restitution to be made, and if the prisoner should be killed the captor was to have requital at a ransom of reasonable amount. In the granting of safe-conducts by the commanders of the allied army those of Vienne were to be respected by the Scots, and in like manner those of the Scottish leaders by the French.¹ It was by these simple rules that our rude ancestors endeavoured to establish unanimity and good fellowship with their allies as well as humanity towards an enemy against whom they were embittered by a long series of national injuries.

All being in readiness and impatient for action, the Scots, commanded by the Earls of Fife and Douglas and accompanied by their French allies, crossed the Border with their wonted rapidity and advanced towards Roxburgh. But finding its castle too strong to be taken without a tedious and unprofitable leaguer they turned aside and fell upon the

¹ *Parliamentary Records of Scotland*, A.D. 1385.

smaller fortresses, two of which they took, and afterwards laid siege to Werk Castle, a place of great strength on the Border held by Sir John Lussbourne. The resistance, though desperate, was brief, and the castle was taken, according to Froissart, chiefly through the valour of the French troops, who scaled the battlements and fought closely, dagger to dagger, with the garrison until the English were fain to yield. After destroying the castle of Werk and plundering the adjacent country the Scots advanced towards Newcastle, but were suddenly brought to a pause by the tidings that the Duke of Lancaster, with the lords and military array of the northern counties, was approaching them by hasty marches. The French chivalry were elated with the prospect of a pitched battle, in which their skill and prowess would be shown to better advantage than by a war of petty skirmishes and surprises. Such, however, was not the policy of the Scots. They had enriched themselves and weakened their powerful enemy by the plunder of villages and districts; and now that a force was coming against them which though they could not encounter they might easily elude, they resolved to retreat and abide the onset within their own border, where they could fight or starve out the English at pleasure. This to the French must have seemed a contemptible and inglorious mode of warfare; but they were obliged to acquiesce, and the retreat was accomplished without seeing the enemy.

The arrival of the French in Scotland had alarmed, and the late invasion provoked, the English council; and Richard II., now in the heyday of youth and freed from the French war, was impatient to make his first assay in arms by a campaign against the Scots. It was thus that his grandsire Edward III. had commenced his novitiate in arms, and he doubtless hoped that he would be more fortunate than his grandfather. One of the largest military musters which England had ever yet made was assembled for the occasion; and Richard, accompanied by his warlike uncles and barons and with an army of 60,000 archers and 7000 men-at-arms, advanced confidently to the Border. On hearing of this approach, "My lords," said Vienne to the Scottish leaders, "make your army as large as you can, for if the English come as far as Scotland I will offer them battle." "God help us!" replied the Scots either devoutly or dryly, but still promising nothing; for they knew that there was nothing to compel them to abide the chance of a second Bannockburn. The English crossed the Tweed and entered Scotland; but Vienne, seeing no preparation for resistance, became doubly urgent

with the Scottish nobles that they should set all upon a cast and give instant battle to the invaders. To appease him they offered to conduct him to a place where he could have a full view of the English army; and if after this he still persisted for the encounter, they promised that they would not baulk him. The Earl of Douglas and his associates accordingly conducted Vienne to the top of a high hill in the neighbourhood, at the bottom of which was a pass along which the whole English army must defile in their march. The spectacle below astounded the observant Frenchman. He saw men-at-arms enough to sweep his whole array off the field with a single onset. He saw those terrible archers, but a tithe of whose numbers had sufficed to turn the scale of victory against the best armies of France, and a few discharges from whose quivers would have been enough for the destruction of the whole Scottish host. An array that with varlets and camp followers amounted to 100,000 men, accompanied by trains of wagons and baggage-horses that could scarcely be numbered,¹ composed an amount of weight and strength that could not be resisted—an inundation that must be permitted to roll on until the impassable mountains arrested it, or the law of reflux sent it back to its native bed. "You were in the right," cried John de Vienne, "in not wishing to fight the English." He was soon gladdened to learn, however, that this inroad was not to be made with impunity, and that the Scots were prepared in their own way to requite it tenfold. While the English were burning huts which in a few days could be rebuilt, and wasting the fields that grew little else than heath, the Scottish army would be revelling in the full abundance of England, melting its vessels and ornaments of gold and silver into portable ingots, and laying the wealthy burghers of the thriving towns under heavy contributions. Leaving their enemies to the hunger and disappointment that awaited them, the 30,000 Scots and their 2000 French auxiliaries broke through the western marches, and being joined by the retainers of Archibald Douglas, Lord of Galloway, they proceeded to ravage Cumberland with their wonted severity and success.

In the meantime Richard II. advanced into Scotland and met with no opposition. But his resistless host, as it wound its way onward, found that not only there were no enemies to conquer, but no provisions to eat; for the Scots, before they repaired to their shelters, had cleared the country of everything but the green

¹ Three hundred thousand horses, according to Walsingham, were employed in various ways by the English in this expedition.

crops, while the English foraging parties found nothing but an ambushment in every forest and mountain pass. Nothing remained for Richard but to waste and destroy, and to this he addressed himself with a reckless earnestness that surpassed the havoc of his predecessors. Not only the villages that lay in his march were given to the flames, but the religious dwellings which former invaders had revered; and thus the stately monasteries of Melrose and Jedburgh were destroyed without mercy. The invaders advanced to Edinburgh, where they remained five days, and at their departure not only destroyed the city but set fire to the church of St. Giles, and would also have destroyed Holyrood but for the interposition of the Duke of Lancaster, who respected the hospitable sanctuary in which he had found shelter and a home.¹ This was the utmost that could be done by the invaders, who found that it was full time to make a hasty retreat, for provisions had utterly failed them and many had already died of hunger. Their purpose was also quickened by tidings of the damage wrought by the Scottish army in England, where they ravaged at will with none to check them. They hastily returned by their former route and crossed the Border, but not as conquerors. The inroad had been nothing but a march and a countermarch; there was neither warlike deed to tell nor trophy to show; and Richard himself, instead of winning an additional kingdom, had only commenced that series of faults and blunders through which he was to lose his own.

While the English had been employed in such unprofitable havoc a heavy requital was in the course of exaction upon their own hearths and possessions. After wasting Cumberland and Westmoreland, in which neither castle nor hut, neither town nor hamlet was spared, and menacing Carlisle, which the French assailed with their ordnance but with little effect, the news that the English were on their return induced the Scots to prepare for a retreat. The advantage they had already gained could only be secured by eluding their enemies, who were striving to meet and intercept them, and by reaching Scotland in safety with their plunder. Such indeed was the amount of loss they had inflicted that the French boasted that they had themselves burned more in the bishoprics of Durham and Carlisle than the value of all the towns in the kingdom of Scotland. Their retreat was effected by a different route from that which the English had taken, and thus the two armies re-entered their respective countries about the same period and without an encounter. On

returning into Scotland the French, to their dismay, found the whole country laid waste and apparently dispeopled; but in a few hours what was lately a solitude was crowded with multitudes, who emerged from the depths of the forests, from caves, and from mountain passes in which they and their cattle had been sheltered, and where it would have been perilous to follow them. The land was once more swarming with men unconquered and undismayed. Of their losses, too, the Scots made light, declaring that with six or eight stakes they would soon construct for themselves new houses. Their French allies, who had studied war as a science, and who had witnessed it upon its grandest and most artificial scale in the conflicts of their own country with the English and Flemings, had now seen it in a form which neither their tacticians had taught nor even their troubadours fabled. They must have felt how strong the land was in its poverty where small invading armies were likely to be defeated and large ones starved, and at what a disadvantage England must continue the war against a people who had so little to lose, and to whom the excitement of battle itself was a positive luxury and gain.

But whatever the meditations of these allies of Scotland may have been they were quickly and disagreeably cut short. After a three-months' sojourn in the land, and after having done their devoir, they were anxious to return to France, and this the more especially that they and their horses were likely to die of hunger if they attempted to outstay a Scottish winter. But before they were suffered to depart they were to be brought to count and reckoning. From the hour of the arrival of these auxiliaries the Scots, who had limited their wishes to a few hundreds of French lances, were startled by the coming of so numerous a reinforcement, and complained that the King of France had helped them too much. To the difficulty of providing also for so many and such dainty guests was added the arrogance of these new-comers, who laid violent hands upon whatever they needed, and wasted what they did not deign to use. The French had done them more mischief, the Scots alleged, than the English themselves, by recklessly riding through their corn, oats, and barley in their march, instead of keeping on the common roads. Moreover, they had cut down the timber which formed the valuable property of Scottish knights and gentlemen, and this without leave asked or obtained, to construct houses for themselves and sheds for their horses. And for all this a full disbursement was demanded before they left Scotland, otherwise not a ship should be at

¹ *Scotichron.* l. xiv. c. 50; Walsingham, 342.

their service nor mariner to man it. Serious though these offences were the conduct of the Scots towards strangers and allies would have seemed both inhospitable and unjust had not graver offences been chargeable upon the French, which Froissart has not stated, but of which early French writers make mention. They had carried their wonted profligacy into Scotland, and intrigued with dame and damsel, to the great indignation of its stern and sensitive inhabitants; and De Vienne himself was accused of having an amour with a high-born lady who was cousin of the king. Unable to help themselves the French were compelled to submit, and while a few of the poorer knights were allowed to depart De Vienne and his principal officers consented to remain in pawn until the full amount of the assessment was paid. When the money was forthcoming, which had to be remitted from France for the occasion, they departed, "cursing Scotland and the hour they had set foot there." On landing in France, as the greater part of the knights and men-at-arms were dismounted, their first process was one of those offences which, however lightly thought of in their own country, had so greatly startled and offended the Scots: they seized the labouring horses wherever they found them in the fields, and rode off with them to their several homes.¹

After the departure of their allies the Scots continued that warfare which, in consequence of the troubled state of England and the imbecile character of Richard II., they could now turn to a successful and profitable account. As they had so widely harried the Border their inquiry was directed towards a field as yet the least visited, and happily for their purpose they selected that part of Cumberland which comprised Cockermouth and its neighbouring districts. Here a rich harvest awaited them, for the country was populous and fertile, and the people were dwelling in security, having experienced no invasion since the days of Robert Bruce. Into this devoted region accordingly a Scottish army of thirty thousand light troops entered, under the leading of Robert, Earl of Fife, the king's second son, James, Earl of Douglas, and Sir Archibald Douglas, Lord of Galloway. For three days they continued their wide and wasteful havoc, and were so successful that there was not a man in that army, even the feeblest, says the old historian, but might have his hands full of plunder if he chose. Among the plunder was an old charter stamped with a large waxen seal, having written upon it the following brief and rhyming royal grant:—

"I, kyng Adelstane, giffys here to Paulan Oddam and Roddam, als gude and als fair, as ever thai myn war; and tharto witnes Mald my wyf." When the officers presented this antique document of the illustrious conqueror of Brannanburgh to the Earl of Fife, afterwards Duke of Albany and governor of Scotland, he was delighted with its straightforward brevity and unmistakable distinctness, and declared that there was more truth and good faith in the few simple words of these old times than in the lengthened prolixity and frivolous exceptions into which the language of law had already expanded.²

A young Scottish hero was now to appear upon the scene, although only for a moment, but upon whose romantic history our old Scottish writers, Bower and Wyntoun, linger with evident delight. This was William Douglas, natural son of the above-mentioned Sir Archibald of Galloway. Of form almost gigantic, and with strength and personal prowess correspondent to his stature, he seems to have been the young Achilles of the Scottish soldiery, while his gentle disposition and amiable qualities endeared him to those who might otherwise have envied his personal superiority and warlike renown. A warrior from his boyhood, the deeds of William Douglas, both in battle and single combat, had even while a youth raised him to the highest distinction; while he was so dreaded by the English that at last they would scarcely venture to assail him when their numbers were as four to one. This early renown, together with his beauty and amiable qualities, so won upon the heart of Egidia, the king's daughter, that although the King of France, moved by the wide report of her charms, had secretly sent a painter to Scotland to secure her likeness, and was also seeking her in marriage, yet she preferred to him the landless and illegitimate William Douglas—while, contrary to the usual tenor of romances, her father himself approved of her affection, and bestowed her in marriage upon her chosen paladin, with the fair lordship of Nithsdale for her dower.

Such was the hero who at this time was chosen to conduct an expedition full of enterprise and peril, being nothing less than a descent upon Ireland, which had remained unvisited by the Scots since the fatal expedition of Edward Bruce. But the piracies of the Irish upon the coast of Galloway made forbearance no longer possible, and the young lord of Nithsdale embarked for Carlingford, with only five hundred soldiers, to chastise the robbers in their own stronghold. Having anchored upon the Irish

¹ Froissart.

² *Scotichron.* l. xiv. c. 51.

coast he landed with only a part of his force, being unable to procure boats enough to convey the whole at one disembarkation; but his attack on Carlingford was so vigorous that the terrified citizens were glad to compound for an armistice by the promise of a large sum of money. This delay was merely sought to entrap and overpower him; and they sent a messenger by night to Dundalk for assistance, representing how easily the Scots might be assailed in the midst of their security. Douglas, who had no suspicion of their treachery, had retired to the shore with scarcely two hundred men, who were employed in lading the ships, when he saw the English of Dundalk, to the number of eight hundred horsemen, advancing upon him. Though taken by surprise he rapidly drew up his little band, and although the fierce onset of the cavalry was seconded by a sally from the town, Lord William and his followers so gallantly bestirred themselves that both English and Irish assailants were put to the rout. After this victory the Scots set fire to the town and reduced it with its castle to ashes, and took possession of fifteen ships laden with merchandise that lay at anchor in the harbour. On their return homewards they ravaged the Isle of Man, and after landing at Loch Ryan in Galloway Lord William and his officers mounted their steeds and rode off in all haste to join the army, which at that time was prepared for a fresh invasion of England.

For this invasion the season and circumstances were peculiarly tempting. The late inroad of Richard II. into Scotland, and his wanton destruction of sacred edifices when he found no enemy to oppose him, made the whole nation more eager for war than ever. It had added the crime of sacrilege to his established character for inability; and in this case the Scots may have felt that, in addition to other advantages, they had got heaven itself enlisted upon their side. The Border counties of Northumberland and Durham were also likely to be but partially defended, on account of a new feud between the powerful families of Percy and Neville, whom Richard, with his usual impolicy, had set at variance. Animated by these considerations the Scottish nobles resolved to carry the war into England upon a larger scale than heretofore; and that their purpose might be concealed till the moment of outbreak they held their meeting and planned their arrangements at a feast at Aberdeen, where they were far enough removed both from the Scottish capital and the English Border. It was agreed that every noble should muster his retainers, and that all should assemble at Jedburgh in the middle of August. It was also agreed that their

sovereign should be kept in ignorance of their purpose, for they well knew his pacific disposition, which they unjustly stigmatized as arising from cowardice or military ignorance. On the appointed day of meeting there was such a warlike muster at Jedburgh as had not been seen in Scotland for sixty years. It consisted of twelve hundred men-at-arms and forty thousand infantry, some of whom were armed with the bow, but in which they were no match for the English archery, while the greater part carried battle-axes slung over their shoulders, "with which," says Froissart, "when engaged in battle, they give deadly blows." An army thus accoutred reminds us of the gallant array of Harold, the last of the Saxon kings of England, that contested the ground of Hastings against such fearful odds. First to the place of assembly came James, Earl of Douglas, destined to be the hero of the war; and after him was a long array of noble leaders whose names are renowned in Scottish history, and which Froissart, the chronicler of chivalry, records with affectionate minuteness. Before commencing their march another meeting was held at Yetholm, about twelve miles from Jedburgh, to concert their plan of action.

The gathering of such a thunderstorm, however, could not be wholly without notice; and when tidings of the feast of Aberdeen were carried to the Border lords of England they well knew that such a banquet was only a prelude of battle. To ascertain more distinctly the purposes of the Scots they sent heralds and minstrels, the chartered travellers and journalists of the age, into Scotland, who brought back intelligence of the meeting that was to be held at Jedburgh. Instantly every castle and mansion in Northumberland was full of warlike preparation, which, however, was conducted without noise or show; for they were to be in readiness either to afford a stout and unexpected resistance to the invaders, or to furnish soldiers for a counter inroad. To learn still more explicitly of their enemies' movements, they also sent a gentleman well acquainted with the country to attend the great Border meeting, who so ably discharged his task that he was present in the guise of a Scottish groom attending his master at the church of Yetholm, and heard the whole proceedings and their plan of the campaign. Enriched with intelligence, he hastened back to the place where he had tied his horse; but some Scotsman ("they are all thieves," adds Froissart) had stolen the animal, so that he was obliged to set off on foot. Two Scottish knights who observed him thought it scarcely less than miraculous that he should forego his good steed without clamour or in-

quity; and thinking from this circumstance that all was not right, they arrested him and brought him before their leaders, who soon extorted from him the purposes of his employers. From his account it was learned that as soon as the Scots should enter England the Border lords, who were not strong enough to meet them in the field, designed to invade Scotland and by a different route, which was to be determined by the advance of their enemies, so that there might be no risk of meeting. In this way they hoped to work their full pleasure upon the defenceless country, and recall the Scots for the protection of their own homes. The lords were delighted to have such knowledge of a plan which they knew how to counteract, and for this purpose they resolved to distract the English by a twofold invasion, which should be made simultaneously across the eastern and western marches. By this new movement the bulk of their army was to advance upon Carlisle, but be in readiness for battle or the defence of their own country, while the smaller division was to make for Newcastle-upon-Tyne and carry its ravages into the heart of Durham.

According to this arrangement the two divisions of the Scottish army, after they had marched from the forest, took an affectionate farewell of each other and went on their separate ways, the division intended to act upon Carlisle, consisting of more than two-thirds of the whole force, being under the command of the Earl of Fife. The other, upon which the more active, and as it fell out the more efficient part of the invasion devolved, was placed under the command of James, Earl of Douglas, a young warrior, but already as able a leader and as stalwart a combatant as the most illustrious of his name. It consisted of not more than three hundred men-at-arms and two thousand foot, with a usual proportion of sutlers and light-armed prickers, as its success depended more upon rapid movements than weight or strength. But besides its heroic leader, it had for its officers the Earls of March and Moray, Sir John Sinclair, Sir James Lindsay, and Sir Alexander Ramsay, with other knights and squires, whose prowess made them in themselves worth a whole host of ordinary soldiers. Until they reached the bishopric of Durham no notice was to be given of their presence, and therefore they advanced with celerity and silence through the by-ways, neither plundering nor seeking a skirmish. In this manner they crossed the Tyne and entered Durham before their war-cry was heard or their presence felt. But here the scene was instantly changed; town and village, hamlet and hut, were in a blaze; and the

terrified inhabitants were everywhere fleeing before an enemy whose rapid and shifting movements seemed to multiply their numbers tenfold. It was only by these tokens that the Earl of Northumberland learned that the Scots were at his gates; upon which he sent his two sons, Sir Henry and Sir Ralph Percy, to Newcastle to garrison the town and watch the motions of the invaders, while he himself remained in his stronghold at Alnwick. Meanwhile Douglas had swept through the country unopposed as far as the gates of Durham, and after collecting a rich booty he returned by the way of Newcastle to rejoin the main army as had been previously arranged. But the temptations to halt before Newcastle were very strong; for cooped up within its walls were the flower of the Border chivalry of England in greater numbers than the houses could contain, but who had not dared to issue forth, though the smoke of Scottish devastation was constantly in sight, because they thought that the main army was in the field instead of a detachment. Before the ramparts of Newcastle therefore the Scots remained three days waving the Douglas banner of the crowned heart, displaying the rich spoils they had collected, and defying their enemies to come out and recover them. No battle indeed was offered in reply, for the English still thought that these hardy challengers were but the van of the principal army. But among so many swelling spirits kindled to rage by such bravadoes there were enough eager for single combat and adventure; and during these three days joustings at the barriers were frequent, where the Scottish and English knights tried each others' prowess in fierce hand-to-hand encounters. In such combats it was impossible but that James of Douglas and Sir Henry Percy, surnamed the Hotspur, should cross their lances, as each leader was reckoned the bravest knight of his respective nation; and an encounter accordingly took place on the third day between these two mighty champions, compared with which the other meetings were but of small account. It is strange that Froissart has neglected to describe what blows were given, and what plate and mail were rent asunder in the tourney; but after a long conflict the advantage was decidedly with Douglas, who mastered the spear of his antagonist with the silken pennon attached to it. This pledge of his success he waved proudly aloft, exclaiming, "I will carry this token of your prowess with me to Scotland, and place it on the tower of my castle at Dalkeith that it may be seen from afar." "By God, Earl of Douglas," replied the indignant Hotspur, "you shall not even bear it out of Northumberland; be assured you shall

never have this pennon to brag of." "You must come then this night and seek for it," said Douglas; "I will fix your pennon before my tent and shall see if you will venture to take it away."

These were words of mortal defiance; and according to the code of chivalry Percy must redeem his pennon that night, or before it crossed the Border, let the chances or the issue of battle be what they might. As it was the last night of their stay before Newcastle the Scots kept strict watch, expecting a midnight onset from the town; but during the successive hours the ominous pennon continued to flutter before the tent of Douglas untouched. Hotspur indeed would have rushed out upon the adventure and assayed to "pluck up his drowned honour by the locks," but was withheld by his friends, who were unwilling to hazard a midnight plunge that might carry them into the heart of the whole Scottish army. On the morning the Scots deliberately commenced their homeward march, storming on their way the tower of Ponteland, which they razed to the ground, and on the second day they reached the village and castle of Otterburn in Redesdale, about twenty-eight miles from Newcastle. They attacked the castle, but found it too strong to be taken without a regular siege, which would have delayed their march; and the Scottish lords and knights advised that they should instantly continue their retreat and rejoin their friends in the neighbourhood of Carlisle. But Douglas was young; he was a knight and a renowned one; and the chivalrous point of honour, which was dearer to him than life or even victory itself, required him to make a full halt before crossing the Border that Percy might have time to make good his vaunt. His captains, who fully partook of his sentiments, were easily induced to risk themselves and the whole expedition upon this most arbitrary punctilio; for they knew that while a lost army might be replaced or a defeat recovered, their knightly honour, once foregone could never be restored. They agreed, therefore, to remain two or three days longer at Otterburn and continue the siege of the castle. Accordingly they proceeded to encamp themselves in regular fashion, and with such military skill as redeems them from the charge of foolhardiness. In front of them, between their encampment and Newcastle by which they would be attacked, was a level marsh; and the entrance to this they fortified with a barricade of carriages and baggage-wagons; while behind it were their horses and the sheep and cattle of their plunder under the guard of their suttlers and camp-followers, who were strong villains, although armed only with

stakes and knives. Behind all this, on the solid ground, was the bulk of the army, having on one side a marsh and on the other a small wooded hill, so that they were well guarded from surprise in front, and protected on either flank. They had also carefully examined the neighbouring grounds in every direction, and made arrangements for defence according to the various forms in which they might be assailed during the hazards and eventful shiftings of a night attack. In all these particulars, which are minutely stated by Froissart, we find full proof that if James, Earl of Douglas, showed the chivalrous recklessness of Bruce at Methven, he fully atoned for it by the provident skill and wisdom of Bruce at Bannockburn.

In the meantime Hotspur was chafing like a caged lion within the walls of Newcastle, when certain knights and squires who had followed the retreat of the Scots brought him joyful tidings: it was, that the enemy were few in numbers and unsupported, and were encamped no further off than Otterburn. Instantly the impatient warrior shouted, "To horse! to horse!" vowing that that very night he would beat up their quarters and recover his pennon. He would not wait for the Bishop of Durham, who was hourly expected at Newcastle with a powerful array, but started in pursuit at once with eight thousand foot and six hundred men-at-arms, which he thought more than enough, as they nearly quadrupled the Scots. With him was his brother Sir Ralph, scarcely less renowned in arms than himself, and the best chivalry of Northumberland, who made his cause of personal quarrel their own. Their impatience soon cleared the intervening ground, and brought them so unexpectedly into the neighbourhood of the Scots that the latter, who were at supper wearied with the siege of the day, were only warned by the war-cries of the English and a furious attack on their outposts. Each man instantly buckled on his armour and repaired to his separate standard; but so brief was the time that some were but imperfectly armed, having not sufficient leisure to don all the parts of a complete panoply; and such, we are told, was the case of Douglas himself, who in consequence fought at disadvantage, and was more easily wounded and struck down. Amidst this hurry the battle had commenced, and was continued with fury at the outposts, although the combatants had no light but that of an autumnal moon, which threw its faint, melancholy lustre over hill and plain, and only revealed the moving forms of men like flitting and uncertain shadows. The onset had been begun by a headlong attack of the English upon the camp-followers at the entrance of the morass,

whom they mistook for the main body; but so well were these hardy churls intrenched, and so gallantly did they maintain their ground, that the Scottish army had leisure to defile silently from the camp and round the side of the neighbouring wooded hill, unperceived by their enemies, whom they thus took in flank and at unawares. The English were astounded at this unexpected appearance: they found that they had been wasting their strength upon mere grooms and varlets; and that the battle had only now commenced, and to their disadvantage; for the attack of the Scots was so sudden and vigorous as to shake their loose array and disturb the confidence of their advance. And now commenced such a close hand-to-hand death-struggle between the two armies as the wars of Scotland and England, fruitful as they were in such encounters, had seldom witnessed. Forests of opposing lances closed and crossed each other; lords and knights threw themselves into the press of combat, where their only cognizance that could now be read was the ardour of their onset and the weight of their blows; while the chief distinction between friend and foe was the loud frequent war-cry of "A Percy! a Percy!" returned with equal ardour by that of "A Douglas! a Douglas!" In such an impatient fight the bow of England was thrown aside as useless, and all was committed to the issue of a personal struggle where the long spear or brown-bill was only exchanged for the dagger, and where every combatant fought as if his own prowess was to decide the victory.

A battle so waged could not be long of uncertain endurance: one party was certain to give back, and the other to follow up its advantage; and it seemed as if on this occasion the Scots must at last yield ground or be overpowered, not only from their greatly inferior numbers, but also their less complete equipments. Where they were met with a bravery and hardihood equal to their own it seemed as if nothing but some happy unexpected chance could turn the scale in their favour, or even save them from ruin. And that chance now depended upon the personal prowess and devotedness of their gallant young leader. His arrangements had been marked with the highest military skill; and now that they were thus far successful, he resolved by one desperate effort to clutch and secure the victory, which, if still tampered with, was likely to forsake him. Grasping, therefore, with both hands a massive battle-axe, and followed by a few of his attendants, he dashed into the throng: wherever his heavy weapon fell a man went down; and before his resistless advance the crowd was parted on either side and

he was soon in the midst of the enemy. But they as quickly closed and hemmed him round; three spears pierced and bore him to the earth; and when he fell his head was cleft with the stroke of a battle-axe. From the faint moonlight the English were unable to discover what antagonist they had thus overcome, and they only knew that some matchless man-at-arms had gone down in the random encounter. In the meantime his successful onset had inspired the Scots with new spirit; their bravest knights charged into the lane he had opened in the enemy's ranks; and fighting their way through glimmer and gloom, they reached the spot where their dying leader lay. Beside him lay Sir Robert Hart, one of his knights, who had followed him through the whole onset and received fifteen wounds; and over his fallen body stood a valiant priest, his chaplain, Sir William of North Berwick, "who at this time," says Froissart, "had exchanged his profession for that of a valiant man-at-arms, had followed the earl with his battle-axe in his hand, and had by his exertions more than once repulsed the English." The first to recognize the dying earl was Sir John Sinclair, his kinsman, who anxiously said, "Cousin, how fares it with you?" "But so so," answered Douglas. "Thanks be to God, there are few of my ancestors who have died in chambers, or in their beds. I bid you, therefore, revenge my death, for I have but little hope of living, as my heart becomes every minute more faint. Raise my banner, which has fallen with the gallant squire who carried it; shout my war-cry; and conceal my death, for the enemy would triumph if they knew it." The two Sinclairs, Sir John and Sir Walter, and Sir James Lindsay, paused no longer: blood instead of tears was to be shed; and, lifting the honoured banner from the earth, they raised the inspiring cry of, "A Douglas! a Douglas!" that soon brought a gallant company of knights and squires to their side. The battle was renewed with fresh ardour by the Scots; and believing that their chief was still living and pressing through the enemy, they made so desperate a charge that the English ranks were broken, borne backward, and at last put to utter flight. They could not rally again, and were chased full five miles from the battlefield by the victorious Scots. It was in this last and decisive part of the combat that Sir Ralph Percy was taken prisoner, and soon afterwards Hotspur himself, while the best part of the bravest knights of Northumberland lay dead in the field or were among the captives. After such a life-and-death struggle, and such a fearful carnage, it was marvellous with what rapidity the gentle courtesies of peace succeeded, and how readily the victors and vanquished ac-

corded with each other, notwithstanding the intensity of national rivalry and the long list of injuries on either side; and this engaging quality in the chivalry of the period, which is of immeasurably higher worth than its mere brute strength and reckless daring, Froissart is careful to describe. "The English and Scots," he says, "are excellent men-at-arms, and whenever they meet in battle they do not spare each other; nor is there any check to their courage as long as their weapons endure. But when they have well beaten each other, and one party is victorious, they are so proud of their conquest that they ransom their prisoners instantly, and in such courteous manner to those who have been taken, that on their departure they return them their thanks." Such was especially the case at Otterburn, for the same writer tells us, "When the Scots saw the English were discomfited and surrendering on all sides they behaved courteously to them, saying, 'Sit down and disarm yourselves, for I am your master;' but never insulted them more than if they had been brothers."

Such were the principal events of the memorable battle of Otterburn. It occurred on the 19th of August (1388) after a warm day of autumn, and when nothing but the uncertain light of the moon directed the changes of the conflict; and it was maintained with such obstinacy that it lasted several hours. The particular spot on which it was fought is still called Battle-riggs in commemoration of the event. While announcing the great disparity of numbers, which was so much in favour of the English, Froissart is careful to mention that the latter were somewhat fatigued by their hasty march from Newcastle, while the Scots, who had just rested and supped, were in better trim for action. But it was the admirable foresight and strategy of the Earl of Douglas contrasted with the impetuous advance of Hotspur that balanced the inequality of both sides, as well as his personal prowess that finally turned the scale. No stratagem even of the Bruce's wars was superior to that of the Scottish encampment, where the whole English force was successfully resisted at the entrance by the mere camp-followers, and tempted to waste half their strength to no purpose; while the Scottish soldiery were safely withdrawn to the ground that had been previously selected in the event of a sudden onset, and upon which they could act with the best advantage. Compared with the number of combatants on the side of England, the list of noble prisoners who fell into the hands of the Scots was unusually great, and perhaps could scarcely be equalled since the great victories of Robert I.; for the chief aris-

tocracy of Northumberland and Durham had followed their redoubted leader upon the chase, and were now to share his captivity. As a great national and political event, indeed, the victory of Otterburn has been unjustly misprised, because it produced no such immediate or striking results as that of Bannockburn or Stirling. But it was the fittest of events for the work it was designed to accomplish. It was not the recovery but the maintenance of the country's freedom that was now at issue, and this could be best accomplished by a successful inroad into England. At a season, also, when chivalry was so fully in the ascendant this victory, which occupied one of the foremost places in the chivalrous records of Europe, was calculated to produce a powerful moral impression not only upon the Scots themselves, who perpetuated it in their national songs and legends, but upon other countries, whose admiration and sympathy it kindled for an obscure, remote nation of which they might otherwise have never heard. As a gallant passage of arms it loudly proclaimed to friend and enemy that one of the chosen homes of chivalry was the bleak mountains of Scotland; and that these from henceforth were neither to be irreverently approached nor rashly invaded.

It was only a short time after the battle that some of these effects were strikingly illustrated. The Bishop of Durham, for whose arrival Hotspur had been too impatient to wait, reached Newcastle with 5000 foot and 2000 horse; but on finding that the Percies had already set out, he continued his march to join them. Had the junction been effected the destruction of the Scots at Otterburn would have been more than probable. Scarcely, however, had the warlike prelate got a league upon his way when he was met by fugitives from the battle who declared that all was lost, and that the pursuing Scots were close at hand. At these dismaying tidings there was such a hasty desertion among his followers that scarcely five hundred abode together, so that he judged it wisest to return to Newcastle and reassemble fresh troops to confront the victors. The muster was so effectual that by sunrise he was at the head of 10,000 horse and foot, with whom he immediately proceeded in the direction of Otterburn. But the Scots were aware of the bishop's advance and prompt to welcome it. They fortified their camp as before, so that it could only be entered by a single pass; provided for the wounded of both parties; and removed their prisoners to a neutral ground, being contented with their promise to attempt no escape whether they might be rescued or not. All being thus in readiness, the Scottish captains "ordered their minstrels to

play as merrily as they could." And here Froisart gives us a more particular account of this martial horn-music which was peculiar to the Scottish armies of the period. "The Scots," he says, "have a custom when assembled in arms, for those who are on foot to be well dressed, each having a large horn slung round his neck in the manner of hunters; and when they blow all together, the horns being of different sizes, the noise is so great it may be heard four miles off, to the great dismay of their enemies and their own delight." With this tremendous concert the English were greeted when as yet they were three miles off, "and it seemed as if all the devils in hell had come thither to join in the noise!" And still as they advanced the dissonance became louder and more hideous, being renewed at regular intervals, while such of the English as had never heard it before felt their nerves unstrung and their teeth set on edge. But on reaching the brink and entrance of the morass neither the bishop nor his best captains were in a mood to attack this confident legion of trumpeters; for they saw how formidably they were intrenched, and they remembered that on the same ground they had beaten Hotspur himself, accompanied by the best of their Border chivalry. In this mood, after standing at gaze for a short time, they wheeled about and returned to Newcastle without a stroke, while the Scots marched leisurely homeward. But it was a funeral procession rather than a triumphal march, for the young hero, whose body they brought with them in a car, was beloved by the whole soldiery. The corpse was interred with military honours in the abbey of Melrose; the pennon of Percy was preserved as a trophy and heirloom by the only child of the earl, an illegitimate son, through whom it has descended to a Douglas of our own day. The ransom of the noble English prisoners taken in fight was so great that nothing equal to it had been won by the Scots since the triumph of Bannockburn.

The indolence of Robert II. continued to increase with years, so that he at length almost wholly withdrew from the cares and duties of royalty; and the power of the nobility, already too great, was increased by his remissness. A semblance of royal authority at least was still, however, in demand, were it only to sanction the lawless proceedings of the powerful, and a meeting of the three estates was held at Edinburgh in 1389 for the purpose of electing a regent of the kingdom. John, Earl of Carrick, eldest son of the king and heir to the throne, might have seemed in this case the fittest representative of that royalty to which he was afterwards to succeed. But he was not only as

indolent as his father, but lame also from an accident in his youth, so that he had little to recommend him to the turbulent nobility, who passed him over and elected his younger brother Robert, Earl of Fife, to the regency. This new ruler was little fitted for such a warlike people, as his military talents were very moderate and even his personal courage questionable. But he possessed a stately form and bearing, as well as sufficient craft to conceal his defects and wear the show of a brave soldier and wise governor. Above all he was best suited for the purposes of his electors, who, in raising him above his elder brother as well as his own deserts, might reasonably calculate upon his gratitude and subserviency.

On being raised to office the regent was impatient to signalize his rule by a new invasion of England. This was the more necessary as the bulk of the Scottish army which remained under his command had effected nothing, while Earl Douglas was wasting Northumberland and Durham and crowning the inroad with the victory of Otterburn. Nor was the will to second him wanting among the Scottish chiefs, provoked as they were by the bravadoes of the Earl of Nottingham, Marshal of England, and now through the captivity of Hotspur warden of the eastern marches, who reproached his countrymen for their late defeat by such trash of men as the Scots,¹ who were so inferior too in numbers; and he repeatedly declared that if he could find the opportunity of a fair field he would meet these Scots in battle, though their numbers should double his own. This was as deadly an insult as the affair of the pennon, and the Scottish warriors were impatient to meet the boaster and defy him to make good his threats. In the age of chivalry it was argument enough for a war between two kingdoms, like a pair of combatants in the lists, even though the fate of either kingdom should be sealed by a single lance-thrust. A Scottish army was quickly mustered under the command of the Earl of Fife, who was accompanied by Archibald, the new Earl of Douglas, and other nobles; and they crossed the Border, caring only for the quarter where the marshal might easiest be found. But the Earl of Nottingham, who had now added prudence to his valour, took up a strong position which he was resolved not to quit; and to the invitation of the Scottish regent to come forth and make good his promises he modestly answered that he had no license to expose the lieges of his king to any danger—a reply which was received by the

¹ Exprobrando eis in hoc, quod passi sunt Scotos, semi-homines, ut dicebat, super eos apud Otterburn victoriam obtinere.—*Scotichron.* xiv. c. 55.

Scottish army with derisive shouts and peals of laughter. After staying half a day in front of the English encampment and displaying their banners in defiance to provoke the enemy to battle, but in vain, the Scots wasted the country in their usual fashion and recrossed the Border without a blow.¹

It was not long after this chivalrous promenade that a truce between France and England, including the allies of both kingdoms, which was to continue for three years, was concluded at Boulogne; and an embassy was sent from the French and English kings to Scotland to intimate the terms and obtain its assent. To the peaceful Robert II. no offer could be more acceptable, and his subscription to the truce

was the last act of his reign. Soon after he died at his castle of Dundonald in Ayrshire, on the 13th of May, 1390, at the age of seventy-four, and after a reign of nineteen years.² The pacific spirit in which he governed his kingdom was perhaps as advantageous to its real interests as the activity with which he had defended its liberties during the earlier part of his career; for when he died Scotland was not only at peace but also free, no portion of it remaining in the hands of the English except the castles of Berwick, Roxburgh, and Jedburgh. In such a case it might be ungracious to inquire how much of this useful forbearance might be traced, not to a wise and well-studied principle, but to mere inertness and indifference.

CHAPTER V.

REIGN OF ROBERT III. (1390-1406).

Accession of John, Earl of Carrick—His name changed to Robert—Character and Circumstances of Robert III.—Amusing incident at his coronation—Divided state of the kingdom at his accession—Outrages committed by the nobles—Desperate encounter with Highlanders—A Lowland feud—Plan for suppressing the Highlanders—Combat between the clan Kay and clan Quhele at Perth—Chivalrous meetings between the Scotch and English knights—Combat in London between Sir David Lindsay and Lord Wells—Ludicrous encounter between a Scottish knight and Sir Piers Courtenay—Growing ascendancy of the Scottish nobility—Its causes—Expedients of Robert III. to maintain himself against it—Creation of Scottish dukes—Account of the Duke of Rothesay, the heir-apparent of the throne—His opposition to his uncle, the Duke of Albany—He is appointed king's lieutenant for Scotland—Laws for the repression of powerful offenders—State of royalty in Scotland compared with England—Deposition and death of Richard II.—Report of his having escaped to Scotland—Personage there supposed to be Richard II.—Purpose of the Scottish government in setting him up—Marriage of the Duke of Rothesay—Contentions which arose from the marriage—Offence given to the Earl of March—He leaves the country and allies himself with England—War between England and Scotland resumed—Defeat of the English at Preston—Henry invades Scotland—His imperious demands—The Duke of Rothesay's defence of Edinburgh Castle—His challenge to Henry and its contemptuous rejection—Clemency of Henry's proceedings—Fruitless close of his invasion—The Duke of Rothesay's excesses—He is watched by his enemies—Account of them and their motives—They entrap and imprison the prince—His death by starvation at Falkland—Defeat of the Scots at Nesbit Moor—The Earl of Douglas invades England—His rash proceedings—His signal defeat by Hotspur and the Earl of March at Homildon—Offence given by King Henry to the Percies after the victory—They resolve to rebel—Hotspur makes a feigned invasion into Scotland—Siege of the tower of Cocklaws—Douglas unites with Hotspur—Hotspur's defeat and death at Shrewsbury—Albany's apparent impatience to commence war with England—His speedy return to pacific measures—Lawless proceedings of Alexander Stewart—Manner in which he becomes Earl of Mar—Anxiety of Robert III. for the safety of his son James—He sends him to France—James captured on the voyage and carried prisoner to London—Henry's purposes in detaining him—Effects of his capture on Robert III.—Robert's death and character.

On the day after the funeral of Robert II. at Scone the coronation of John, Earl of Carrick, eldest son of the late king, was performed with due solemnity. As the name of John, from the misfortunes of its royal possessors, was now considered of evil omen, a concession was made to the general prejudice by changing the name of the present sovereign into that of Robert,

which was endeared to them by the memory of the great national hero. At his accession Robert III. had passed his fiftieth year, and was of that tall stature and majestic appearance which, among a rude people, are such essential attributes of royalty; but, on the other hand, his lameness, which unfitted him for warlike exercises, his gentleness and love of peace, and

¹ *Scotichron.* xiv. c. 55.

² *Scotichron.* xiv. 56.

his indolence, in which he resembled his father, were little fitted either to attract a warlike nation or coerce an arrogant nobility. It was unfortunate also for such a sovereign that he was only the second of a new dynasty which accident rather than royal descent had raised to the throne, and that his predecessor had not distinguished his reign either by conquest or warlike enterprise. Robert III. had been married more than thirty years to Annabella Drummond, daughter of Sir John Drummond of Stobhall, by whom he had as yet only one son, David, afterwards the unfortunate Duke of Rothesay, who was only twelve years old at the period of his father's accession to the throne. A king so situated, and of such a character, could be little more than a nominal ruler, and his government, whether for good or evil, must depend upon those who superintended it. And in this case Robert was disastrously provided in having his brother, the Earl of Fife, continued at the head of affairs, with the title of Governor of Scotland, while a younger brother, the Earl of Buchan, named from his ferocity and lawless deeds "the Wolf of Badenoch," was permitted to rule with almost unlimited sway over the northern parts of the kingdom.

On the morning after the coronation an incident occurred that must have sufficiently warned the new sovereign of the cares and difficulties of his position. On such a solemn occasion, when Scone was crowded with multitudes eager to pay their homage, the inclosures round the monastery had been destroyed and the harvest trampled down by the nobility and their attendants. As the loss to the monks was serious Robert Logie, a canon who was storekeeper of the monastery, repaired to the palace to crave some compensation of the king, but on his errand being known he was rudely driven away by the doorkeepers. A new plan was necessary to bring the petition to the royal ears, and this the canon speedily devised. On the morning after the solemnity the peace-loving Robert was roused from sleep by a din under the window of his apartment that woke and astounded the whole palace, and on peering out they found the villagers of Scone and servants of the monastery bearing aloft a puppet of straw, called a rapegyrn, which was a sort of harvest-home goddess or queen, while the whole band yelled, shouted, and sang, accompanying their music with a terrible symphony of horns and rattles, under the direction of Logie, who acted as choir-master. He was instantly seized and dragged into the royal presence, where he thus expounded the mystery of the chorus:—"Marvel not, great king, that we have woke you so early; for every year we usually expend

thirty or forty pounds in cutting down our harvest: but now, thanks to your royal highness, the whole is done to our hands so thoroughly by your own reapers, that it will not cost us a penny either in cutting down or laying up in the store; and now, therefore, we are holding our wonted harvest jubilee." This sarcastic mode of explaining the grievance might have cost the reverend wag something heavier than the expense of a year's ingathering, for the bystanders were urgent for a severe and instant punishment. But the king, "enucleating the problem through his higher reach of intellect," caused an immediate inquiry to be made into the loss which the monastery had suffered, and full payment rendered, while he applauded the monk for his wit, courage, and dexterity.¹

On ascending the throne the first care of Robert III. was to confirm the truce with England which had been established before the demise of his father, and renew the league with France. But although the blessings of peace were thus secured to the country for eight years there were too many internal feuds, partly among the Scottish nobles and partly among the different races by which the land was occupied, to permit these benefits to have full operation; and the removal of a common danger, which had compelled a common union, was used as an opportunity for the settlement of personal and party disagreements. It was ominous also of the spirit of the times that these internal outrages were commenced in the quarter from which the maintenance of peace and order might have been most expected. Scarcely had the coronation ended when the Earl of Buchan, better known as the Wolf of Badenoch, rushed down from the mountains at the head of a band of wild Highlanders upon the lands of the Bishop of Moray, with whom he was at feud; and after wasting the territory he set fire to the town and cathedral of Elgin, which were burned to the ground.² His deeds were followed in a similar spirit by Duncan Stewart, his natural son, who seemed to be emulous of such a father. This young savage, who appears to have been a favourite and hero among the mountaineers, crossed the range of hills overlooking the district of Angus, and descending unexpectedly upon the Lowlands at the head of three hundred Highland catherans proceeded to slay and plunder with indiscriminating and unsparing ferocity. To oppose this destructive mountain torrent Sir Walter Ogilvy, sheriff of Angus, Sir David Lindsay of Glenesk, and Sir Patrick Gray advanced with a force of only sixty men, but they

¹ *Scotichron.* l. xv. c. 1.

² Keith's *Scottish Bishops*, p. 83; Wyntoun, b. ix. c. 13.

were chiefly knights and men-at-arms, confident in their military discipline and good horses and plate armour, who held in chivalrous scorn their half-naked enemies, who had no other weapons than the heavy broadsword and light round target. But their contempt was grievously chastised. The Highlanders rushed upon their mailed antagonists as fearlessly as the berserkars of old, while the terrible sweep of the mountain brand made the best tempered shields and plated cuirasses an uncertain defence to their wearers. Nearly the whole party was cut to pieces with their leader, Sir Walter Ogilvy, and of those of knightly rank none escaped the slaughter except Gray and Lindsay, who were sorely wounded. A striking incident recorded by Wyntoun gives a terrible idea of the ferocity and contempt of death that was cherished by these Highland warriors. Sir David Lindsay in one of his careers transfixed an assailant, bore him down, and pinned him to the ground with a single lance-thrust. But the savage, writhing up against the weapon that held him fast, cleared his right arm for a parting stroke, which he dealt with such force that his sword cut through the stirrup-leather and steel boot of Sir David and pierced his leg to the bone, after which he instantly expired, while the knight was borne disabled from the field.¹

But among the nobles of Scotland at this time there appear to have been other wolves than he of Badenoch, and more unreasonable grounds of quarrel than that of the poor Highlanders, who thought that by an invasion of the Lowlands they were only seeking what should of right have been their own. A feud had originated between the Lady of Fyvie, the wife of Sir David Lindsay, and Robert Keith, a powerful baron, who was also that lady's nephew. It might have been thought that between two persons of such rank, and so closely related, the cause of quarrel must have been one of vital importance, but it was nothing more than the dislodgment of some of Keith's masons from a debatable water-course upon which he had set them to work. To requite the offence, or to make good his claim, the dutiful nephew mustered his retainers and besieged the lady in her castle of Fyvie. These tidings hurried her absent husband to the spot at the head of three or four hundred armed vassals, to settle the question by the usual mode of adjustment; and in the litigation of arms which ensued Keith was driven from the field with the loss of more than fifty of his men. "Thus," says Wyntoun, "Robert was discomfited in that bargain, and went not to Fyvie to besiege that good lady any more."

The Highlanders were now found so dangerous to the north of Scotland, while the unsettled government was too feeble to restrain them, that a plan was devised for their suppression worthy of the most refined periods of Jesuitism. They were to be tempted and encouraged to the work of mutual destruction through their own Celtic animosities. A certain number of their best and bravest, from whom danger to the Lowlands was most to be apprehended, were to meet within barriers for mortal combat, while the king and court were to be spectators of the conflict and the awarders of the prize of superior valour and skill. The honour of this insidious device has generally been attributed to the Earl of Moray and Sir James Lindsay, and the victims whom they selected were the clan Kay and the clan Quhele, two rival tribes of great power who had long nourished against each other a feud of unextinguishable hatred. And never was invitation to combat more eagerly accepted than by these ferocious warriors, who panted for such an opportunity at once of displaying their prowess and wreaking their hatred, and were too simple to detect the fraudulent purpose that lurked beneath. On the day appointed thirty champions, the choice of clan Quhele, under their leader Christie Johnson, were confronted by the same number of the clan Kay, commanded by Shaw, the son of Ferquhard, upon the level ground of the North Inch of Perth, the place selected for battle, and armed with their usual weapons of bows and arrows, sword and target, battle-axe and short knife. The king, the principal nobles, and a countless multitude were present as on-lookers; and the barriers, from which there was to be no retreating, were almost to close like a sentence of doom upon the gladiators within. But at that moment the heart of one of the champions failed him, and seizing the opportunity he escaped from the inclosure, threw himself into the Tay, which he swam across, and was soon beyond pursuit. This diminution of the stipulated number would at once have stopped the conflict had it not been for the eagerness of an armourer of Perth, who was ready to throw away his own life that the show might go on unchecked; and leaping the barriers he offered to supply the place of the runaway for the paltry wage of half a mark. The offer was accepted. The battle was commenced by a shower of arrows, but impatient of such distant work the combatants closed; axe and sword descended, and the shivered targets were soon a weak defence to the naked bodies which they were raised to cover. Such an encounter, where none would give back a single step, and where martial ardour was raised into demoni-

¹ *Scotichron.* l. xv. c. 3; Wyntoun, ix. c. 14.

acal fury, could not be otherwise than brief as well as deadly; and at the close only one of the clan Kay was left alive, while eleven of the clan Quhele, including the armourer, still kept the field, and were proclaimed the conquerors. At this strange tournament, unlike anything they had ever witnessed, were several illustrious French and English knights, who as they looked on must have shuddered at such a wild display of valour and such a wanton spilth of blood. But it accomplished the intended purpose, for these Highland clans were too weak to resume their destructive inroads upon the Lowlands until a new generation had risen up.

But it was not by such partial outlets as Lowland feuds and Highland combats at out-rance that the restlessness of the Scots would find sufficient vent during this "piping time of peace;" and while some, like the Lord of Nithsdale, were allured into distant countries by the rumour of foreign wars or religious crusades against the unbaptized pagans of Lithuania, others were eager to try their valour in all courtesy in the lists against the English, whom they were precluded from encountering in hate and upon the battlefield. Mutual cartels were therefore frequent between the two parties, as well as stinging reproaches interchanged to serve as a ground for combat; and the fields of the two kingdoms were traversed by knights-errant impatient for dangerous adventures, and eager to give proof of their prowess. What else, indeed, could have been expected from the still unextinguished embers of such a fight as that of Otterburn? A chivalrous passage of the period will give a distinct idea of such meetings. Soon after the accession of Robert III. Sir David Lindsay of Glenesk, one of the bravest knights in Scotland, coveted a trial of arms with the Lord Wells, one of the stoutest of English champions. His wish was most cordially answered, and the tournament appointed to be held in London before the king and court on the following month of May. The preparations of Lindsay were worthy of so important an occasion: he even despatched a vessel to London for a new suit of armour; and on the specified day and hour he entered the lists of Smithfield, accompanied by a brilliant train of knights, squires, and attendants. On the champions receiving their spears the trumpets sounded, the two knights met at full gallop in mid career, and so terrible was the shock that Lord Wells was hurled from his saddle to the earth, while Lindsay, although staggered in the encounter, was still able to keep his seat. The English were chagrined at this result, for Wells was a strong as well as skilful tilter; and they raised a cry of foul play, alleging that Lindsay,

from the firmness of his seat, must assuredly be strapped to his saddle. As soon as the Scottish knight understood that such a report was prevalent he rode up to the royal presence, bounded from the saddle to the earth, and having thus shown the falsehood of the charge he sprung again upon his steed without the help of the stirrup, although covered with the complete armour of the tourney, which was heavier than that used in battle. The combat was resumed on foot, until it became so close that they grappled dagger to dagger, when Lindsay, whose personal strength was almost matchless, drove his weapon between one of the lower joints of his enemy's harness, lifted him off his feet, hurled him to the ground, and there held him at his will. By the sanguinary laws of chivalry he might have put the fallen and disabled knight to death; but instead of thus using his victory he raised Lord Wells from the ground and led him to the queen, to whom he gracefully surrendered him as her captive.¹

In another of these English tournaments in which the Scottish knights took a part, an exhibition occurred of a more mirthful character. Among the combatants was Sir Piers Courtenay, brother of the English primate, a knight renowned for his graceful person and skill in warlike exercises, who flaunted in a rich new surcoat upon which a falcon was delineated, and underneath it, we are told, the following distich:—

"I beer a falcon, fairest of flicht;
Quha so pinches at hir, his deth is dicht
In graith."

He had not glittered long in this gay trim when he was horror-struck to see in the lists a certain Scottish knight surcoated exactly like himself, but having a magpie upon it instead of a falcon, and the following rhyme—

"I beer a py pykkand at ane pees;
Quha so pykkis at hir, I sal pyk at his nese,
In faith."

No defiance could have been more offensive, and Sir Piers was soon careering in the lists against the gibing Scot, with whom he ran two courses. But while he lost two teeth in the encounter, he failed to unhorse his adversary, for the wily Scot, contrary to the usual custom, wore his helmet unstrapped, so that each time it gave way before his opponent's well-aimed lance. Sir Piers was clamorous at the trick and the unfair advantage it afforded, upon which the Scottish knight offered to run six more courses with him on exactly equal terms under a penalty of two hundred pounds to be

¹ Wyntoun, b. ix. c. 12.

THE ARMOURER OFFERS HIS SERVICES.

One of the most memorable incidents in the reign of Robert III. (1390-1406) was the combat between the Clan Kay and the Clan Gohels or Chatten on the North Inch at Perth. Thirty champions from each clan were chosen, and armed with bows and arrows, sword and target, battle-axe and short knife; while the king, the chief nobles, and a multitude of people gathered to see the fight and proclaim the victors. Just when the combat was about to begin, however, one of the champions lost courage, leapt over the barriers, swam the Tay, and thus escaped. This diffidence in the number of the combatants would have stopped the contest, had not an exponent of Perth jumped into the arena and offered to take the place of the runaway, if he were paid half a mark. This offer being accepted, the fight which ensued was at once brief and deadly. Only one of the Clan Kay survived, but eleven of the Clan Gohels, including the armourer, kept the field, and were declared the conquerors.

THE ARMOURER OFFERS HIS SERVICES.

One of the most memorable incidents in the reign of Robert III. (1390-1406) was the combat between the Clan Kay and the Clan Quhele or Chattan on the North Inch of Perth. Thirty champions from each clan were chosen, and armed with bows and arrows, sword and target, battle-axe and short knife; while the king, the chief nobles, and a multitude of people gathered to see the fight and proclaim the victors. Just when the combat was about to begin, however, one of the champions lost courage, leapt over the barriers, swam the Tay, and thus escaped. *This difference in the number of the combatants would now have stopped the contest, had not an armourer of Perth jumped into the arena and offered to take the place of the runaway, if he were paid half a mark.* This offer being accepted, the fight which ensued was at once brief and deadly. Only one of the Clan Kay survived, but eleven of the Clan Quhele, including the armourer, kept the field, and were declared the conquerors.



ALFRED PEARSE.

THE ARMOURER OFFERS HIS SERVICES IN THE COMBAT

BETWEEN THE CLAN KAY AND THE CLAN QUHELE OR CHATTAN ON THE NORTH INCH, PERTH (A.D. 1396).

exacted from him who should break the bargain. The condition was readily accepted by Courtenay before the king and lords; but when this was done, the Scottish knight, who had lost an eye at Otterburn, raised his helmet, and pointing to the defect insisted that his opponent should submit to a similar deprivation before he mounted his war-steed. This was still worse than the loss of two teeth, and Sir Piers Courtenay on drawing back was adjudged to pay the fine amidst the loud laughter of the whole court.¹

During the season of peace that still continued in the form of a truce which was renewed from year to year, the power of the aristocracy attained a height that overshadowed both king and people. It was the natural tendency of the national character, owing to the Celtic element with which it was so largely intermixed, and that only needed such weak reigns as those of the two first Stewarts to mature into full development. Had Robert III. possessed the energy of the first of that name he would doubtless have struggled against the evil; but even then he would probably have been crushed by a progress which his opposition could only retard, but not permanently arrest. The sole expedient he adopted in his difficulties was that of a timid and sluggish spirit; it was to strengthen himself against the confederacies of the nobles by allying himself with the malcontents of their order. But by thus acting he only escaped the domination of the one party by becoming the tool of the other. To this weak policy of temporary shifts and expedients, under which the political malady became too permanent for cure, we may trace those bonds into which he entered with certain of the nobles, whereby they covenanted (but not without a large requital from the royal bounty) to protect him and his son and heir the young Earl of Carrick against all who might be leagued against them. In this way, from the period of the present reign, in which the practice was adopted, we find the Scottish kings nothing more than sovereigns of half their court, and ruling only by the sufferance of the other half, with whom they were obliged to unite as partners and equals. This helplessness of Robert III., and the means by which he sought to shelter and protect it, were evinced by an innovation otherwise of trivial account. The title of duke, which had been imported from France to England, was now to be adopted in the Scottish court; and as this title, only short of regal, was to be confined to the royal family, the only personages for the present

worthy to receive it were the Earl of Fife, the king's brother, who still retained the authority as well as title of Governor of Scotland, and the Earl of Carrick, the heir to the crown. But upon the first of these, who had strengthened himself so powerfully through the nobility that he could not be withstood, was bestowed the title of Duke of Albany—a territory comprising the whole of Scotland north of the firths of the Clyde and the Forth, while the future sovereign was created only Duke of Rothesay, the name of a paltry hamlet in an island not sufficient in those days to form an ordinary lordship.

At the period of his attaining such a stinted promotion, which was in April, 1398, the Duke of Rothesay had passed his twentieth year. According to the testimony of our early historians, as well as the popular traditions, he was of handsome form and countenance, ingratiating demeanour, and skilful in warlike exercises—those qualities which, in a young prince, first attract the eye and win the favour of the nation whether it be rude or civilized. As his education had been carefully superintended by his mother and her kinsman William de Drummond his tutor, he seems to have added to his knightly accomplishments a more refined taste and higher scholarship than was usual among the Scottish chivalry of the period.² He had also been early employed, as far as the jealousy of his uncle the Duke of Albany would permit, in the management of public affairs, in which he had shown considerable spirit and discretion. He seems indeed to have possessed in a large degree those noble elements of character which were afterwards so fully developed in his younger brother, afterwards James I. But unfortunately when he had reached the most dangerous season of early manhood he lost both mother and tutor, while their place for the purposes of moral culture were ill supplied by his subsequent preceptor and companion the infamous Sir John Ramornie. The suspicion with which he was watched by his uncle, and the care with which, as he attained to manhood, he was defrauded of his due share in the government of the realm, were of themselves enough to drive such a spirit into unwarrantable excesses; and accordingly the accounts of the period which testify to his high qualities, speak also of his scorn of public opinion, his wild love

² He is thus described by Wyntoun:—

“Oure Lord the Kingis eldest sone,
Suete, and wertuous, yong, and fair,
And his nerast lauchful Ayr;
Honest, habil, and avenand,
Oure Lord, oure Prynce, in all plesand,
Cunnand in-to Letterature,
A seymly persone in stature.”

¹ *Scotichron.* I. xv. c. 6.

of pleasure, and unruly and licentious practices. But all this was perhaps nothing worse than the wildness attributed to his young contemporary Henry of Monmouth, which an entrance into the proper stir of life and the duties of royalty would have fully corrected. It must also be borne in mind that neither the knightly nor the royal examples of Scotland were favourable for the cultivation of princely morality.¹ Such was the young Duke of Rothesay when he entered the arena to compete with the overgrown power of Albany, and vindicate his own claims as heir-apparent to a share of the national rule.

Of the necessity of such a hazardous adventure on the part of the prince there was now sufficient proof. Not only his own justifiable ambition was to be satisfied, but the national discontent appeased. Albany, who was supported by the power of the nobles, was obliged in requital to sanction their excesses, and thus the country was unsettled by their feuds and pillaged by their extortions. The cry was both loud and urgent that if the king must needs govern by deputy the Duke of Rothesay and not the Duke of Albany was by nature and right entitled to this delegated power. A parliament was compelled to meet at Perth on the 27th of January, 1398, and there the evil was boldly exposed and the remedy applied. The disorders of the realm, it was declared, were to be imputed to the misgovernance of the king and his ministers; and if Robert should excuse his own mismanagement he was still bound to be answerable for his ministers, and to call them to account and trial. This, however, through sickness he had been unable to do, and therefore they now elected the Duke of Rothesay to be king's lieutenant, with full royal authority for the space of three years to exercise his office by the direction of parliament, or advice of a council appointed in its stead, consisting of the chief prelates and nobles of the realm. These councillors were to be sworn to give "leal counsel" without feud or favour, while the duke was to swear to all the conditions and duties contained in the coronation oath. These duties, indeed, at the present period, were more than usually onerous; but for their proper discharge the new regent was invested with such power that the interference of the king himself was precluded, and his counter orders were to have no force or effect. In this way the Scottish parliament at this early day not only asserted its right to transfer the kingly rule, but to hedge it within proper

limits and restrictions. Having thus provided for the efficiency of the royal lieutenant, the other ordinations of this remarkable parliament were directed to the raising of pecuniary supplies for the expense of government, the negotiations with foreign powers, the maintenance of peace with England, and the effectual administration of the laws for the suppression of internal disorder—regulations which, if properly enforced, would of course have regenerated Scotland, and made it the wonder and envy of the nations. But the circumstantial and emphatic terms in which they were expressed showed not only how much these regulations were needed, but how little they were likely to be obeyed. The chief of them, as might have been expected, were levelled at those who rode about the country with more attendants than they could support, and whose course, during the rule of the late governor Albany, had been attended with raids, burnings, and destructions. These strong evil-doers the sheriff was ordered to arrest, and bind over to stand their trial at the next justice ayre. But how was he to arrest the noble in his castle, or with a thousand spearmen riding at his back? If such a one in the numerous class of powerful offenders disobeyed the summons he was then to be put to the king's horn, and his goods and estate were to be confiscated. Such a sentence could only end in a destructive civil war or the empty flourish of a trumpet.²

But pitiable as was the condition of the kingdom thus parcelled out among an ungovernable aristocracy, it had still some consolation in its sufferings. From the very number of its petty tyrants each one was able to keep his fellow in check, so that none should exclusively predominate; and between their mutual opposition the crown kept its place and pre-eminence like the roof of a building, whose stability is maintained by the equal pressure of the opposing beams and rafters. It was only in the event of one of these nobles becoming too predominant that the balance could be destroyed and the constitution endangered. This was but sorry comfort at the best; but it seems to have been suggested to the Scots from the state of affairs in England, which were apparently still stranger and worse than their own. Richard II., whose follies and misrule had so greatly aided in the emancipation of Scotland, ventured this year to consummate his folly by such an act as was least in keeping with his character. Although a very king of tilts and tournaments he yet stopped two combatants when their lances were already laid in

¹ The three Roberts, without excepting the last, were the fathers of illegitimate children.

² *Record of the Scottish Parliament*, A.D. 1398; Tytler's *History of Scotland*, vol. ii. pp. 394-8.

rest, and by that act prevented the chance of mutual destruction between two powerful nobles who most endangered his own safety, and by one of whom in a few months after he was deposed. Well, indeed, might the Scots marvel, for they had never seen the like in their own country, when Henry of Lancaster with only twenty lances disembarked at Ravenspur, to depose his sovereign and step into the vacant throne. And still more they wondered when this king, instead of being slain in defiance of all law, as many kings had been among themselves, was actually deposed by regular form of law, as if he had been an old abbot guilty of open dilapidation in the church revenues. "Nay," says Wyntoun, "it was worse, for the abbot would have been allowed his defence before judgment was given against him."¹

The death of the unfortunate Richard soon after in Pontefract Castle was but the natural close to the history of a deposed king. Had Henry IV., the successful usurper, allowed him to survive unmolested, even though in close and sure confinement, the fact would have formed a singular episode in the course of such royal changes. But the contradictory accounts that were given of the causes and mode of his death produced in the public mind the usual degree of scepticism as to the reality of the decease itself; and although the corpse was exhibited in St. Paul's Church, still the report was prevalent that this was not the body of the king, but that of Mandelain his chaplain, who a short time before had been conveniently executed for treason, and who closely resembled him. Richard, therefore, must have escaped from prison; he must still be alive, although closely concealed alike from friend and enemy, and would doubtless reappear as soon as his adherents were strong enough to rise in arms for his restoration. All this was nothing more than the wonted reaction that follows closely upon a usurpation; and it would serve either as a check upon the new sovereign or a rallying point for the factious and discontented. But where the while was Richard lurking? This question it best suited the Scots and the politic Duke of Albany to answer. He was in Scotland safe from the designs of Henry IV., and would be produced in fitting time to Henry's confusion. The story is thus delivered by Wyntoun, the chief authority for the marvellous tale:—

"After Richard had remained for some time in the Tower of London he was brought of set purpose to Pomfret, and delivered to the keeping of two well-trusted and honourable men, Swinburn and Waterton. But these good men,

having compassion upon him, caused the report to be spread abroad that this King Richard was dead. But after that the report arose that he was living. And how it arose I will tell here, according as I heard it, although I cannot tell how he escaped out of Pomfret. In the 'out isles' of Scotland there abode a poor man. A lord's daughter of Ireland of the Bisset family, dwelling there, who was married to a gentleman a brother of the Lord of the Isles, had seen King Richard in Ireland while she was living there. And when she saw this man she knew him well, and going to her husband she told him that this was the same King of England whom she had seen in Ireland when he was there, according to her recollection. Right soon he called that man to him and asked him if it was so; but he denied, and did not say, Yea. The man was sent in haste to the Lord of Montgomery, and soon afterwards was conveyed to Robert, our King of Scotland. The Lord of Cumbernauld had also that man a while in keeping; and then the Duke of Albany got him and kept him a long time after. Whether he had been king or not there were but few that knew for certain. He was of no devotion, and had seldom will to hear mass. From his bearing he was likely to be half wild or mad."

A similar account of the escape of Richard from Pomfret and his taking shelter in the Scottish isles is also given, though more briefly, by Bower, the continuator of Fordun. According to his narrative, however, the king was discovered in the kitchen of Donald, Lord of the Isles, in the disguise of a poor scullion; and not by a lady but by a jester who had been brought up in the court of Richard, and who was thus able to recognize his royal master. After giving the same account as Wyntoun of the transference of the English king to the court of Scotland, Bower adds, that many of the English malcontents repaired to him, among whom were the Earl of Northumberland, his grandson Henry Percy, Lord Bardolph, the Bishops of St. Asaph and Bangor, and the Abbot of Welbeck—and that Richard, who was then residing at St. Andrews, could be induced by no persuasions either of the Duke of Albany or others to grant a private interview to the Earl of Northumberland. The close of this wondrous tale is, that for nineteen years Richard continued to lead a private life in Scotland, being honourably supported by Robert III. and afterwards by the Duke of Albany; that he died in the palace of Stirling, and was buried in the church of the preaching friars on the north side of the altar.

In the whole of this narrative, which the two historians deliver with some degree of hesitation and without vouching for its veracity, we

¹ Wyntoun, b. ix. c. 20.

perceive the rude groundwork of those more dexterous political fabrications of a later period with which the court of Burgundy so greatly annoyed the reign of Henry VII. It was a mere Perkin Warbeck affair, but without those additional touches which imparted such grace and plausibility to the latter well-finished imposture. To disquiet Henry IV. on his throne and give him full occupation with his own rebellious subjects, no device could be more effectual than a resuscitation of the rightful king; and when the love of the marvellous was roused by the report a counterfeit could be easily passed for the reality. This, too, could be effected the more readily when the juggle was to be performed at such a distance as Scotland, and by such dexterous performers as Albany and his accomplices. Even the selection of such a silly duplicate as the passive half fool or madman whom they adopted for their purpose was a necessary part of the trick; for he was little likely to mar it by breaking bounds and commencing the adventure on his own account. To such a creature a life of privacy was no grievance while he was supplied with comfortable food and clothing; and accordingly he was allowed to eat and drink in peace instead of being paraded to the public gaze, or carried at the head of a Scottish army across the Border, which undoubtedly the true Richard would have been. And sorely did Henry of Lancaster feel the effects of the stratagem. Although he had committed the crime of regicide either by the murder or starvation of his predecessor, yet the "deep damnation of his taking off" was profitless as long as it was believed that Richard was still alive and beyond his reach. He knew that his moody lords believed, or pretended to believe, the tale, and that every Scottish invasion might be tenfold more dangerous than before, having the restoration of Richard for its pretended object. Such was the new and critical relation in which the courts of England and Scotland now stood to each other; and it affords an intelligible explanation to many of those subsequent movements which would otherwise be obscure or incomprehensible.

The most important event at this time in Scotland (A.D. 1400) was the marriage of the young Duke of Rothesay. Although he had so lately been raised to the regency, it is possible that his gay and reckless habits were still continued, and that marriage was judged necessary in addition to the cares of government for taming down his buoyant and somewhat profligate spirit to the gravity of his station. But instead of strengthening the kingdom by an alliance of the heir-apparent to a foreign princess, as was now the political principle of such royal unions,

it was resolved that he should espouse the daughter of a subject; and the honour of having him for a son-in-law became a subject of competition among the higher nobles of the realm. In this contest the powerful Earl of March prevailed; and having paid a large sum by way of dowry into the hands of the king, his daughter Elizabeth was affianced to the Duke of Rothesay. But a still more powerful nobleman than George of Dunbar, Earl of March, was Archibald the Grim, Earl of Douglas, whose pride was roused by the preference, and who interposed with the offer of a higher dowry to be bestowed with his own daughter Marjory. His application was backed by the Duke of Albany and the council, and the facile king assented. On discovering this new bargain the indignant March hastened to the royal presence and peremptorily demanded either that the original compact should be fulfilled or the money he had paid be returned. The king's answer, which was probably a meek one, instead of appeasing the earl's wrath only kindled it into greater fury, and he declared that if his daughter was not righted he would bring such a convulsion upon the kingdom as had never yet been known or heard of. These threats, which he did not scruple publicly to utter, made a hasty marriage of the prince to Marjory Douglas a matter of instant necessity, and accordingly he hurried off to Bothwell, and had his nuptials celebrated openly and with wonted festival. Nothing now remained for March but to execute the latter part of his threat, and for this he prepared by flying to England, having first obtained a safe-conduct from Henry. His flight was the signal for revenge and punishment, and Archibald the Grim, his rival, was prompt in the execution of both. Previous to his departure March had committed his strong castle of Dunbar to the keeping of his nephew, Sir Robert Maitland; but this irresolute youth, dismayed at the approach of Earl Douglas, surrendered to him that almost impregnable fortress without resistance. The capture of his famed stronghold was followed by the confiscation and seizure of the large estates of the absent earl, who, thus driven wholly into the hands of the enemy, became one of the most relentless, as well as formidable opponents which his own country could count in the ranks of England.

At the period of the accession of Henry IV. to the English throne the truce with Scotland had expired, and the Border wars of both countries were resumed with all their wonted bitterness. One of these inroads of the English into Scotland was made by the redoubted Hotspur, impatient to wipe away the disgrace of his defeat at Otterburn, and the Earl of March,

who was equally eager for revenge. At the head of two thousand chosen men they penetrated silently by Peebles to Linton, and there made their presence known by the usual process of fire-raising, in which they burned three villages, and afterwards encamped in fancied security at Preston. But Archibald, the Master of Douglas, and son of the Grim, having advanced upon them by a rapid march from Edinburgh, these gallant warriors fled without waiting for his coming, leaving their tents, plunder, and even their supper behind them, and were chased through the whole night by the Scots, who captured many of the fliers at Colbrandspath, and drove the rest into Berwick. Their parting-blow on this occasion was dealt in the very gateway, and there they captured the lance and pennon of Lord Thomas Talbot. A few months after, on account of the death of his father, Archibald, the gallant victor in this midnight camisade became Earl of Douglas.

From the insecurity of his royal tenure it was the interest of the English king to remain at peace both with France and Scotland. But these fierce Border inroads, aggravated as they were by the conduct of the Scottish court in setting up a pretended Richard, made forbearance no longer possible; and Henry, who was both a brave warrior and skilful leader, resolved by an invasion in person to effect that conquest of Scotland which had so often failed. He accordingly summoned a muster of the whole military array of England to meet him at York; and at his call such an army was raised as Scotland could scarcely meet in the field. He then commenced proceedings by sending from Newcastle a letter to Robert III. and another to the Scottish prelates and nobles, commanding them as their lord paramount to meet him at Edinburgh on the twenty-third day of August (1400), to do homage to his superiority and swear allegiance; and this he claimed as a right possessed by the kings of England since the days of Locrine, the son of Brutus the Trojan.¹ It does not appear that any answer was sent to this ridiculous mandate; indeed Henry was too wise to expect any; but it kept open the English claim of superiority over Scotland, and was a requital for the insult of the Scots in setting up a false claimant to the throne of England. Henry then crossed the Border, advanced to Leith, where he remained three days, and attempted unsuccessfully to gain possession of the castle of Edinburgh, which was gallantly defended by the Duke of Rothesay. During the siege the young duke sent a cartel of defiance, offering, for the purpose of

sparing the effusion of Christian blood, to fight out the quarrel in person at the head of one, two, or three hundred Scottish nobles against an equal number of the English; but Henry, who did not condescend to answer this knight-errant proposal, adverted to it in a letter addressed to Robert III., in which he rehearsed the terms of his son's challenge, and then added sarcastically—"as if he did not think that the blood of *nobles* also was Christian!" In the meantime the castle of Edinburgh was gallantly held out, while Albany, who commanded the army, hovered in the neighbourhood of Edinburgh for its defence, but avoided giving battle. In this way the campaign was protracted until want of provisions and sickness made it necessary for Henry to retreat; and this he did without a single advantage as an offset to such warlike preparations and imperious demands. But as this was the last so it was also the most clement invasion of Scotland ever made by an English king in person, and as such it is worthy of commemoration notwithstanding its lack of warlike interest. During his march into the country he strictly prohibited those burnings, plunderings, and wanton devastations which had hitherto been so usual in the wars of the two kingdoms; and when either town or fortress, village or monastery, desired to be protected he granted the request, and his pennon, with the arms of England, raised upon the wall was a sufficient token to his soldiers for their forbearance. This clemency was especially manifested when two canons of Holyrood repaired to him at Leith and besought him to spare their monastery. "Never let me be thought so inhuman," cried Henry with emotion, "as that I should do injury to any holy church, and especially to yours, where my father, the Duke of Lancaster, when an exile, found so kind an asylum! I am myself half a Scot, being by my mother's side a Comyn; and I came here in arms, as God shall witness, not without due provocation. For in certain letters of your rulers sent to the King of France I am branded as a traitor; and I am here not to hurt your country, but to meet my accuser, and to see if he will dare to make his challenge good." It was well that the honour of so humane an invader as Henry was saved from the usual shame of a retreat; but this was fully effected by the rebellion of Owen Glendower, the Wallace of the Welsh, which obliged him to hasten to Wales without further delay.

During these stirring events, and indeed from the period of his accession, Robert III. seems to have been little more than a nullity, the government being administered in the first instance by the Duke of Albany, and afterwards

¹ Rymer's *Fœdera*, vol. iii. pp. 188, 189.

by the heir-apparent. Of the mixed character and giddy career of the Duke of Rothesay during the earlier period of his life we have already spoken. His excesses seem to have suffered a temporary check by the cares and responsibilities of his high office and by his marriage to the daughter of Archibald the Grim, a father-in-law not rashly to be provoked; while his brave and able defence of the castle of Edinburgh had gladdened the nation with the promise which it gave of his future reign. But at a time when wise counsellors and powerful protectors were most needed he was bereaved of those who could have best filled such offices, and thrown defenceless into the hands of his enemies. The Earl of Douglas, who was wise and powerful as well as terrible, died; the queen, whose maternal heart had been a protecting shield to her son against the calumnies which his enemies brought against him before his own father and sovereign, also passed away; and Trail, Bishop of St. Andrews, one of the ablest and wisest as well as best of Scottish statesmen and prelates, was soon after buried amidst the tears of the Scottish Church. With the decease of these three, which occurred within very brief intervals, the glory and integrity of Scotland were said to have been extinguished.¹ And now, instead of these, three powerful enemies of the prince, whose dusky forms had hitherto been obscured in the background, were to stand out upon the stage in full relief, as the Eumenides who were to pursue their royal victim to the death. First of these, as might be expected, was the Duke of Albany, the uncle of the prince—a sort of Richard III., but utterly devoid of the higher qualities that gilded the character of the English usurper, although as unscrupulous in the means by which he might attain the sovereignty and secure it for his family. Next to him was Archibald, Earl of Douglas, the son of Archibald the Grim, and doubly the brother-in-law of the prince, as he had married a daughter of Robert III., but who seems to have had his hatred only increased twofold by this double relationship. This hostility may perhaps have originated in that proud rivalry with which the race of Douglas now regarded the more fortunate, though not more distinguished house of Stewart, and was not likely to be mollified by the prince's conduct as a husband, especially as his marriage, after two years, was still childless. The third of this malignant league was Sir William Lindsay of Rossey, whose sister the prince had courted

for his bride and afterwards lightly forsaken. As each had such a personal interest at stake the steps of the prince were closely watched, and unfortunately his thoughtless aberrations gave too much scope to the representations they made of his unworthiness. Influenced by these reports, which were carefully borne to the royal ear, the king withdrew his confidence from Rothesay, and subjected him to those restraints which youth can ill endure, and under which a proud ill-regulated spirit is certain to become worse than before.

But, as if such confirmed enemies were not enough to effect the prince's ruin, a false friend was at hand to complete the work. This was Sir John de Ramornie, a man whose character at this time could scarcely have been matched at the Scottish court, as he combined the learning of a clerk with the knightly accomplishments of a soldier and the refined graces of a traveller and able diplomatist. But all these high qualities were only subservient to a cruelty, selfishness, and unscrupulous cunning in which he outstripped his companions, whom he made the subservient tools of his unprincipled ambition. A man so endowed could easily ingratiate himself into the confidence of the young prince, of whom he became the chosen friend and confidant; and at the time when Rothesay was chafing at the new restraints imposed upon him Ramornie proposed a plan for his liberation, and this was nothing less than the assassination of the Duke of Albany, through whom these grievances had been imposed! The prince started and expressed his abhorrence with such generous indignation as made Sir John to perceive that he had overshot the mark. The foiled and baffled conspirator having thus lost his master's confidence, and the hopes he had built upon it, repaired to Rothesay's enemies for the purpose of betraying him and giving full effect to their hostility. And now the hours of the unsuspecting youth were numbered. Influenced by Sir John Ramornie's insidious representations of the prince's continued excesses, and the necessity of still closer coercion, the king granted a warrant for the arrest and temporary confinement of his son, while the charge of enforcing it was intrusted to the Duke of Albany, his own faithful and well-beloved brother. Soon after, the prince, while riding with a few attendants near Strathtyrum in Fife, was arrested by Sir John de Ramornie and Sir William Lindsay, and carried prisoner to the castle of St. Andrews, until Albany and Douglas should decide upon the mode of his future wardship. This was soon settled, and mounted upon a common work-horse, with a coarse russet cloak thrown over

¹ Unde quasi proverbialiter tunc dictum extitit, quod mortuis reginâ Scotiæ, comite de Douglas, et episcopo Sancti Andree, abiit decus, recessit honor, et honestas obiit Scotiæ. *Scotichron.* l. xv. c. 12.

his rich attire, Rothesay was conveyed from St. Andrews to the castle of Falkland, and thrust like a worthless criminal into one of its lowest dungeons. It had been determined by the secret conclave that he should die, and die without the stroke of mercy; while all and each of his enemies was to be free to confront the world with "Thou canst not say I did it!" Placed under the charge of two remorseless assassins, John Selkirk and John Wright, all food was withheld from the prince, and after fifteen days they found to their astonishment that he still lived. A poor woman of Falkland, who had heard his groans, was accustomed, we are told, to repair secretly every night to the grated window of his dungeon, which was level with the ground, and drop through it small morsels of cakes, and convey to him drink from the maternal fountain of her own milk through a small tube that reached his mouth. But this scanty supply was detected and stopped by his keepers, and the long-protracted agony of starvation was brought to a close, but not until their victim had gnawed his own flesh in the extremity of hunger. The body was hastily and privately buried in the monastery of Lindores, while the report was spread abroad that the prince had died of a dysentery. But the whispers of suspicion that were everywhere afloat could not be thus laid to rest, and the popular sympathy, which was founded upon the prince's amiable qualities, made Albany tremble not only for his popularity but his personal safety. Being thus touched in his most sensitive points he convoked a full council on the 16th of May, 1402, to clear himself and his co-adjutors from the charge of having occasioned the death of the heir-apparent. The king's letters authorizing the prince's confinement were produced, while his death was alleged to have been wholly occasioned by disease. Such were the statements of Albany and Douglas before a court that dared not or would not contradict them, whatever might be the conviction of its members. But to make their assurance of immunity more certain Albany procured from the passive king a remission under the royal seal, proclaiming his innocence of having caused or hastened the death of the unfortunate Rothesay. The remission, however, was drawn up in such ample terms, and with such circumstantiality, that instead of clearing these powerful culprits it serves only to establish their criminality.

The din of arms was needful to silence the public rumours as well as to stifle the self-reproaches of the guilty, and therefore a renewal of the war with England was a natural consequence of the Duke of Rothesay's death.

Hostilities as usual were commenced by Border incursions, in which the principal leaders were the Earls of Northumberland and March on the side of England, and the Earl of Douglas on that of Scotland; and thus the sharpness of personal rivalry and rancour was added to the national contention. The chief of these encounters was in consequence of an inroad into England by Sir Patrick Hepburn of Hailes. At the head of a small force he made a successful irruption across the Border; but having delayed his stay too long, March and Percy had time to unite their forces and intercept him on his return. The place of meeting was Nesbit Moor, in the Merse near Dunse; and Hepburn, whose force amounted to only 400 chosen warriors, made such a gallant resistance as might have won the day, when he was unexpectedly assailed by 200 fresh soldiers under the son of the Earl of March. A total defeat of the Scots was the consequence. Hepburn was slain and more than half of his force was killed or taken captive. This loss, too, though apparently so trivial from the small number compared with other encounters, was of serious import, as a large proportion of those who fell or were captured ranked among the bravest knights of the Scottish Border.

Enraged at this defeat and the share which his rival, March, had held in effecting it, Archibald, Earl of Douglas, was doubly anxious for reprisal. He mustered his numerous vassals; and on applying to Albany, who was once more Governor of Scotland, he was reinforced by a strong body of spearmen and archers under the command of Murdoch Stewart, the duke's eldest son. The whole force of the earl amounted to 10,000 men, and comprised several of the highest nobles and many of the bravest knights of Scotland. King Henry was at this time in Wales and fully occupied with the heroic Owen Glendower; but the Earl of Northumberland, his son Henry Hotspur, and the renegade Earl of March were judged sufficient for the protection of the Border. Their plan of resistance was the same that had been so successful at Nesbit Moor, and which had probably been suggested by March, who was best acquainted with the mode of Scottish warfare; it was to abide the Scottish army on its return, when it would be careless of discipline and laden with plunder. In the meantime Douglas drove headlong into Northumberland and penetrated as far as Newcastle, wasting the country at pleasure, but taking no note of the enemy who were mustering in his rear; and in the same reckless spirit he returned until he was brought to a sudden pause at Wooler by the sight of the English array drawn up to receive him, under the

command of Hotspur, assisted by the Earl of March. Douglas immediately took possession of a neighbouring eminence called Homildon Hill and arranged his troops into a solid square, while the position he had chosen, which was like that of Otterburn, gave promise of a similar victory. And such might have been the result; for Hotspur, as brave and rash as Douglas himself, was about to charge up hill with his knights and men-at-arms, where they would have been crushed or hurled down the slope with ease, when his bridle was seized by the Earl of March, who pointed out the madness of such an adventure and suggested the employment of the archery, in which their force chiefly consisted. His advice prevailed and the bowmen were ordered to advance. So large, compact, and immovable was that Scottish array that to close with it hand to hand would have been truly perilous; but its very strength was its weakness in such a distant flight of missiles, where every arrow was certain to find a mark. Accordingly, when the terrible shower commenced the Scots began to fall in heaps; and not only the light armour of groom and common soldier was pierced and riddled by the resistless dint of the forked arrow, but even the well-tempered panoply of knights and nobles, whom the archers could select at pleasure. Impatient of such useless endurance a distinguished Scottish knight called Sir John Swinton cried with a loud voice, "My gallant comrades! what spell has bewitched you that you can neither resist nor advance, but stand still like deer to be shot at? Let those who are willing follow me. In the name of the Lord we shall break in among the enemy, and thus either win life and safety or die with honour!" He was about to gallop down the hill when the brave Sir Adam de Gordon, who had long been at deadly feud with Swinton, dismounted and fell upon his knees before the latter, craving forgiveness for their past quarrels and beseeching the honour of knight-hood from his hand, as that of the bravest of the Scottish chivalry. A hasty sword-touch on the shoulder, a warm fatherly embrace, at once bestowed the distinction and sealed this new bond of friendship. They then rode down upon the enemy with lances couched and at full gallop; "and I have heard that the English declared and swore," says Bower, "that if the rest who stood on the hill had seconded their onset the English would have been defeated and put to flight." But the pair were followed by not more than 100 horsemen, and were soon overpowered and slain. Douglas now perceived his error and was leading his diminished troops down the hill to a close encounter, but the movement was too late; the light archery as

he advanced gave slowly back in the direction of their main body, but halting at intervals, shot their arrows from the lessening distance with such terrible effect that every step of the Scots only increased the havoc and made their chance more hopeless. They were defeated, and in this case solely by the archers, for the English men-at-arms had only to look idly on or give chase when their enemies had turned to flight. Douglas himself, notwithstanding the strength and admirable temper of his armour, which had cost the artist three years to forge, was wounded in five places and taken prisoner; and with him were also taken the Earls of Moray and Angus, Lord Murdoch Stewart, eighty knights, and a great number of esquires and pages. Among the slain of noble rank, besides Gordon and Swinton, were Sir John Livingston of Callander, Sir Alexander Ramsay of Dalwolsie, Sir Walter Sinclair, Sir Roger Gordon, and Sir Walter Scot. Of the number of the common soldiers who fell no account has been given; but from the nature of the fight, in which the Scots were cooped up only to be slaughtered without resistance, it must have been of large amount, and in the pursuit nearly 1500 are said to have been drowned in the Tweed. Small comparatively though the army was, the best and bravest of Scotland had either fallen or were taken captive in this fatal fight of Homildon Hill. On neither side do we see any display of generalship except in the case of the Earl of March, to whose counsel the victory was mainly owing; and if anything could add to the satisfaction of the traitor, as he stood upon the field that was piled with the corpses of his countrymen, it must have been the thought that his rival, the Earl of Douglas, who had become master of his Scottish inheritance and his fair castle of Dunbar, was now a defeated and wounded prisoner in the enemy's hands.

Henry Hotspur, now the victor in turn, might well be excused if he exulted in his success, by which the disgrace of Otterburn was effaced. But an act of ungenerous revenge with which he followed up his triumph at Homildon greatly abates our sympathy for this renowned hero of poetry and romance. Among his prisoners was Sir William Stewart of Forrest, who had been born in Teviotdale when this district was possessed by the English, and who in his boyhood, before Teviotdale had been recovered by the Scots, had pledged his allegiance to the English king in common with the inhabitants of the district. Such cases were of frequent occurrence on either side of the Border, where the boundary lines were continually shifting with the progress of war and conquest, and where the subject of England for to-day might be com-

pelled to transfer his allegiance to Scotland on the morrow, so that to execute the penalties of treason upon such defaulters was accounted ridiculous and unjust. But Hotspur, though himself so soon to become a double traitor against his own native sovereign whom he had marshalled to the throne, was on the present occasion so sensitive about loyalty that he caused Sir William Stewart to be tried as a forsworn subject of the English crown. The knight so effectually justified his conduct that he was acquitted; he was tried a second time, and with the same result. Still the deadly purpose of the Percy was not to be so baffled; and having packed a jury of his own dependants, Stewart was tried for the third time, and, as might be expected, condemned. The sentence of treason was immediately executed with all its revolting barbarities, and the quarters of Stewart, with those of his squire, Thomas Ker, who suffered along with him on the same charge, were exposed on the gates of York. It was not wonderful that the English themselves, who once and again had absolved him, revolted at the deed and proclaimed Sir William an innocent martyr. Our old Scottish historians, who indignantly record the event, do not hesitate to attribute it to the feudal hatred and revenge of Hotspur rather than a love of justice. Wynthoun adds to the story the prediction of a seer in England, who prophesied that before a year had elapsed Percy's own quarters should take the place of those of Stewart; and the poetical chronicler is careful to tell us how this was fulfilled after the battle of Shrewsbury, when the dead body of Hotspur was dismembered and the limbs set up over the gates of York as those of a traitor.

On receiving intelligence of the victory of Homildon, Henry IV. must have perceived the advantages which with careful management it might yield in negotiating for a profitable peace with Scotland. He therefore sent his commands to the Percies on no account to ransom or liberate any of their prisoners, but await further orders. On the other hand, to reward their services and compensate for the ransom of their captives, the king made a royal grant to the Earl of Northumberland of the earldom of Douglas, with Eskdale, Liddisdale, Lauderdale, Teviotdale, the lordship of Selkirk, and the forest of Ettrick—an amount of territory and possession constituting not only a kingly gift, but converting into a king the nobleman who was so fortunate as to receive it. But instead of thus limiting his boon he might also have added to it the fertile Lothians, or even the hundred islands of Scotland, as these must also be conquered before they could be enjoyed, and were

as little in the king's power to bestow as in the earl's to receive and occupy. But perhaps the royal donor was once more thinking of Lochrine the son of Brutus, and the kingly old Trojans of England, his veritable types and predecessors. The proud lords of Northumberland were indignant at the order, which, by depriving them of the ransom of their prisoners, bereaved them of the chief part of their revenue; and they must have sourly smiled at the requital, which was almost as secure from their reach as if the territories in question had been situated in Palestine itself instead of the neighbouring kingdom of Scotland. But to win this conceded lordship of Douglas would serve as an excellent pretext for the levying of forces, when they would be in a condition to call the ungrateful king himself to a strict and humbling account. They resolved, in fact, to rebel and circumvent him by his own craft. They pretended therefore a dutiful compliance, and sent to Henry, as the first-fruits of their obedience, Murdoch Stewart, who seems to have borne the title of Earl of Fife, and several other captives. To keep their army on foot and mature their designs they then invaded Scotland, ostensibly to secure their new possessions; and the first deed of Hotspur was to lay siege to the paltry tower of Cocklaws upon the Border, before which he sat down with his whole force and began to batter the sorry wall in regular form with ram and mangonel. The captain of this tower, John Greenlaw by name, whose rank was only that of an esquire, and whose bravest deed as yet had, perhaps, been nothing higher than to make good his hold against an onslaught of Border thieves, must have been astonished at such "greatness thrust upon him," as to be besieged by a whole army with the renowned Hotspur for its leader. If he regarded it, however, as a joke, he entered into its humour as cordially as his assailants could wish, for he made such a stout resistance that his little fortalice seemed the most impregnable of Scottish castles; and at last when he vouchsafed to negotiate, it was in the style of an equal propounding a national war-treaty. He agreed to surrender at the end of six weeks if not previously relieved by the King of Scotland or the Duke of Albany, and Hotspur gravely ratified the compact. The latter had thus gained time to mature his plans, and to open communications with Albany, who entered readily into the plot, and promised to support him with a numerous army. Sir Henry Percy in like manner gained over to his cause the Earl of Douglas and his other Scottish prisoners, whom he liberated, and who gathered their retainers to his banner. All being thus in readiness for real action he

broke up the mock leaguer, and accompanied by Earl Douglas marched into Shropshire, where he expected to be joined by Owen Glendower at the head of ten thousand hardy Welshmen. As for the captain of Cocklaws, who had thus unwittingly been used as the pivot of a great national revolution, his work was ended, and here his history terminates. It is probable that he did not wake from his trance of doubt and perplexity until siege and besiegers had vanished like a nightmare.

The progress of this rebellion, until its first stage was terminated at Shrewsbury, belongs especially to English history and requires no further notice here, except so far as it was connected with Scotland and its interests. The astute Henry IV., who had been so singularly blind to the real purpose of Percy's Scottish invasion, repaired his negligence with such promptitude and decision that he was soon at the head of an army equal to that of his enemies, and ready to meet them upon a ground of their own choosing. With him was also his gallant son Prince Henry, soon to become the greatest general of his age, and the Earl of March, whose adherence to the English king must have been strengthened by the sight of the banner of the crowned heart floating proudly among those of the opposite ranks. On the other array were conspicuous the towering forms of Hotspur and Douglas, now about to fight side by side, and prove their matchless prowess in a common cause. The onset of Percy's army was commenced by Douglas at the head of his Scottish retainers, and with more than his wonted valour; his charge shook and almost rent asunder the royal ranks, in which his sword made wild havoc; and after killing in rapid succession Sir Walter Blunt the king's standard-bearer, and the Earl of Stafford, he advanced within a few yards of Henry himself, whom he was impatient to reach and encounter. But here his path was crossed by March and his Scottish followers, who rescued the King of England from the terrible dint of that Scottish brand which seldom needed to be followed by a second stroke. Nor was Hotspur himself behind his gallant rival in chivalrous daring and deeds of knightly prowess, and on that day the pair well proved their established renown as the two bravest men of an island of gallant warriors. The tug of battle where Scot met with Scot and Englishman with Englishman, while such interests were at stake, imparted to the contest more than the usual fierceness even of a civil war, and for three hours it raged as if nothing short of mutual destruction could bring it to a close. But the death of Percy by a random arrow checked the ardour of his followers; de-

prived of their renowned leader they gave back, and at last took to flight; and Earl Douglas, sorely wounded, became once more a prisoner to those among whom the Earl of March was an honoured and successful leader. He had lost an eye at Homildon, but his mischance was more serious at Shrewsbury; yet, mangled and mutilated though he was, his restless career was but half ended, and was to close as disastrously as it had commenced, under a foreign banner and in a distant land.

Before this fatal conflict Albany, in consequence of his secret agreement with the Percies, was preparing to make an inroad into the north of England, well knowing that the expedition would be a safe one, as the approaching rebellion would withdraw the English troops from these districts into the interior. Breathing, therefore, nothing but heroic purposes he assembled a council at Falkland; and concealing from them the intended insurrection of his English allies, he only spoke of raising the siege of Cocklaws before the stipulated period had ended. The council was astonished at this warlike outburst, and began one and all of them to represent that it was better to give up such a paltry fortalice than risk the uncertainties of a new war with England, especially when their losses at Homildon were so recent. But the duke, starting from his seat with a look of warlike ardour, exclaimed, "By God and Saint Fillan I will keep the appointed day though none should accompany me but my boy Patrick yonder!" and with that he pointed to Patrick de Kimbuck, his groom, who was in waiting at a distance. The assembly wept with joy and cried, "May God confirm this good purpose he has wrought in you! Such of us as are soldiers, putting our trust in the Highest, give our promise that we will not fail you in such an adventure." Fifty thousand soldiers were speedily assembled at his summons, exulting in the prospect of an invasion into England, and a battle with Hotspur in which the disgrace of Homildon should be extinguished. But all this warlike preparation vanished like a morning mist. On his march the governor received tidings of the defeat of his friends at Shrewsbury, upon which he paused, lost heart, and quickly disbanded the army to resume his pacific attitude.

The insecure tenure of the Duke of Albany's government in Scotland, and the unjustifiable expedients which he adopted to maintain it, had been strikingly illustrated a short time before this popular bravado. Sir Malcolm Drummond, brother of Annabella, the late Queen of Scotland, had for some years been married to Isabella, in her own right Countess

of Mar, one of the richest earldoms of Scotland. But even in his own castle he was attacked by a band of armed ruffians, who threw him into a dungeon, where he soon after died through the hardships of his captivity. A deed so daring and so public could be the work of no ordinary actor, and therefore it was usually attributed to Alexander Stewart, illegitimate son of the Wolf of Badenoch, who, like his brother Duncan, led the life of a Highland bandit, and had made himself famous in the Lowlands by his exploits of desperate enterprise. His subsequent conduct justified the report that fixed upon him the murder of Drummond. The usual season of a widow's mourning had just expired when he suddenly came down at the head of a wild array of Highland catherans upon the strong castle of Kildrummy where she resided, carried it by storm, and persuaded or perhaps compelled the captive lady to accept him for her husband and the lord of her fair earldom, to the prejudice of her own children. This iniquitous union, and the mode of effecting it, was too much even for that lawless age, and therefore some show of right and justice was necessary to still the popular clamour. Accordingly the Bishop of Ross and the chief vassals of the earldom were assembled in state within the walls of the castle of Kildrummy; and Alexander Stewart, like a humble suitor, approached the gates to crave admission, and was met in courteous style by the lady and all her retinue. She there took him by the hand, delivered to him the keys of the castle, and before the prelate and company declared that she adopted this man of her own free-will to be her lord and husband, and hereby surrendered to him the earldom of Mar, and all the castles, lands, and tenements of which she was possessed. Formal instruments of the cession were then drawn out on the spot; and Albany, notwithstanding the iniquity of the whole transaction, was obliged to sanction the transference by royal charter, so that the lawless and base-born freebooter became Earl of Mar, and one of the national leaders and counsellors.

In the meantime the unfortunate Robert III., whose love of ease had been growing with his years, was experiencing the bitter fruits of his remissness, aggravated, as his repentance must have been, by the conviction that effort and exertion would now be too late. Under the ascendancy of Albany he had sunk into a mere nominal sovereign whose authority was of no use except for the subscription of bonds and charters. His peaceful disposition, so unsuited to the country and time, had only procured him the contempt of the nobles, who made war upon England or upon each other according to their

own pleasure, like so many independent kings. And the last and heaviest blow was the miserable death of his son Rothesay, in which his own hand had unconsciously been made an accessory by the royal subscription which had been granted for the young prince's imprisonment. In his strong castle in the island of Bute he now took counsel with the few friends who still adhered to him regarding the safety of his only remaining son, James, Earl of Carrick, the sole obstacle between the family of Albany and the coveted throne, and who, there was every reason to fear, would meet with as little mercy as his brother had done. An instant decision was also necessary, as the Duke of Albany was negotiating for the liberation of his son Murdoch, the Earl of Douglas, and other noble prisoners taken at the battle of Shrewsbury, and was offering, as the price of their ransom, to surrender into King Henry's hands the Earl of Northumberland and his grandson Henry Percy, who, after the defeat of their party, had taken refuge in Scotland. The kingdom could no longer afford a place of sanctuary against such unscrupulous baseness, and it was resolved to commit the prince, now in his fourteenth year, to the hospitality of the court of France, the only ally of Scotland, and where David II. had found protection and a home. Accompanied by Henry Sinclair, Earl of Orkney, Sir David Fleming of Cumbernauld, a relation of the king, and a strong party composed of the barons of Lothian, the young prince rode to North Berwick as if his progress had lain through a hostile country, and embarked with the Earl of Orkney at the Bass, where a ship was in readiness to convey him to France. These armed precautions were not more than needful; for on its return the royal escort was pursued by James Douglas, second son of the earl, and in the conflict that followed at Hermanston Moor Fleming and many of his followers were slain.

Freed from this danger by land the prince hoisted sail, and a fair wind gave promise that he would soon arrive at the desired port. On nearing Flamborough Head an armed English merchant vessel bore down upon them; but this caused little anxiety, as there was a truce subsisting between England and Scotland. They were soon undeceived; for their small unarmed ship was boarded, and the prince and his retinue were carried off as prisoners to London and sent to the Tower. It was in vain that the unfortunate captives remonstrated against this breach of faith, and showed the letter of the Scottish king stating the peaceful purpose of the prince's journey, and recommending him to the hospitality of Henry if he should have occasion to land in England. Henry sourly smiled at their

representations and attempted to answer them with a stroke of wit. "Truly, if the Scots had been grateful," he said, "they should have sent their prince to me to be educated, for I am well acquainted with the French language."¹ So shameful a deed committed during a time of truce would, in ordinary circumstances, have been followed by a destructive war between the two countries; but the astute Henry IV. was too well aware of the state of the Scottish court to be apprehensive of such a result. He knew that nothing could be more grateful to the Duke of Albany than the seizure and imprisonment of the young prince, and that he was little likely to remonstrate against a deed by which his own power would be perpetuated. Henry was also annoyed by the pseudo-Richard whom Albany had set up in Scotland, and knew that he could best counteract the device and keep the Scottish governor in check by having in his possession the heir of the Scottish throne, whom he could detain or liberate at pleasure. It was a selfish game between two crafty politicians in which the rules of common honesty were of no account. As for James, the innocent victim of these devices, he was kept with his tutor, the Earl of Orkney, in strict confinement, and did not obtain his liberty until nineteen years afterwards, when both king and duke had gone to their last account.

The tidings of his son's unexpected capture were carried to Robert while he was at supper in his castle of Rothesay, and so mortal was the blow that from that moment he drooped and

refused to be comforted. A year—a long year of sorrow followed, until the life that lingered within his broken heart was extinguished on the 4th of April, 1406, in the sixteenth year of a reign as little distinguished by action as enjoyment. The gentleness of his character, his humanity and love of peace were so little valued by his turbulent subjects that they would have preferred his brother Albany, or even the Wolf of Badenoch, to rule over them rather than a sovereign whose virtues were those of a cloistered monk instead of an active statesman and enterprising soldier. But little were they to be blamed for their indifference, for it was not by such virtues that their liberties were to be protected or their rights maintained either against foreign enemies or their own feudal oppressors. Even the instance of his profound Christian humility which the old chronicler has recorded must have appeared contemptible in the eyes of those proud barons who were compelled to recognize him as their superior and chief. One day his queen, Annabella, reproached him for not having erected a monument for himself as had been done by his predecessors during their lifetime. "You speak," he replied, "like one of the foolish women. When I think what I am, a worm, and who I am, the least worth of men, I have no wish to build for myself a stately tomb. Let those who covet such honours provide for them: as for me, I would rather be buried in the vilest shed, so that my soul might be saved in the day of the Lord."²

CHAPTER VI.

FROM THE ACCESSION OF JAMES I. TO HIS CORONATION—REGENCY OF ALBANY AND HIS SON (1406-1424).

Duke of Albany becomes Governor of Scotland on the death of Robert III.—Liberation of Earl Douglas—Return of the Earl of March to Scotland—Martyrdom of James Resby—Peace between England and Scotland—Chivalrous career of the Earl of Mar—War resumed with England—Its trivial effects—Claim of Donald of the Isles to the Earldom of Ross—He invades Ross-shire—Battle of Harlaw—Submission of Donald—Establishment of the University of St. Andrews—Relations between Scotland and England at the accession of Henry V.—Albany commences war with England—His expedition into England called the Fool Raid—Scottish auxiliaries sent to France—Their victory over the English at Baugé—Their defeat at Crevant—Their total defeat at Verneuil—The survivors formed into a royal body-guard—Death of the Duke of Albany—His character by his panegyrists—He is succeeded by his son Murdoch—Murdoch's unfitness for government—Negotiations of Earl Douglas for the liberation of James—Character and accomplishments of James—Causes of Murdoch's application for James's freedom—Terms on which James was freed from captivity—His marriage in England—His return to Scotland—Coronation of James at Scone.

By the death of Robert III. and the imprisonment of the Earl of Carrick in England the Duke of Albany succeeded to the government

of Scotland with an amount of power that wanted nothing of royalty but the title of king. This, indeed, he could not obtain as long as the

¹ Walsingham, p. 375; Wyntoun, ix. 25; *Scotichron.* xv. 18.

² *Scotichron.* xv. 19.

heir-apparent was still alive; but Albany's ambition was of that kind which prefers the substance of power to its empty show and reputation. Soon after the demise of the late sovereign a meeting of the three estates was held at Perth, and after recognizing the right of their captive prince to the throne they invested the duke with the regency and the entire government of the kingdom. The ancient league with France was renewed and the truce with England continued. Albany also sent ambassadors to the court of Henry, not, however, to negotiate for the liberation of his nephew, but of the Earl of Douglas and other captives taken at Shrewsbury. This application was successful in the case of the earl, who obtained his freedom by the payment of a thousand marks, and engaging, in the event of the truce being broken by either Scotland or France, to adhere to the cause of Henry. But Murdoch, the son of Albany, was still kept in prison, the English king well knowing that as long as he retained such an hostage he could be certain of the father's forbearance.

Another important return to Scotland was that of the Earl of March. In consequence of the forfeiture of his estates in Scotland and the valuable services he had rendered to the English crown, Henry IV. had conferred upon him several estates in England; but, impatient of exile, or dissatisfied with the cold looks of the English nobility, who must have regarded him as a traitor and renegade, he was anxious to return to his country and his allegiance. An opportunity of negotiation for this purpose was also afforded by the death of the Duke of Rothesay, and more especially that of Robert III., in whose grave his animosities might well be buried. His overtures were favourably received by the Duke of Albany, and the exile was repossessed of his former estates, with the concurrence of the Earl of Douglas, to whom they had been granted, with the exception of the lordship of Annandale and its castle of Lochmaben, which Douglas retained in his own keeping. Happily, however, for the country, the agreement between these powerful rivals was so complete that their deadly feud was extinguished.

Amidst the unwonted tranquillity which now prevailed in Scotland an event occurred which was altogether unexampled in its character, and well calculated at such a season to awaken public inquiry. It was an act of martyrdom, by the burning of James Resby, an English priest in Scotland, who was convicted of adhering to the doctrines of Wickliffe. These doctrines Resby had preached with such eloquence and zeal that at last the Scottish clergy took the alarm, and the bold innovator was tried before

a council of which Laurence of Lindores, a learned theologian and strict inquisitor, was president. The articles of accusation against him amounted to about forty; but his chief heresy, in the eyes of his judges, was his denial that the pope was the vicar of Christ. His able defence went for nothing: he was sentenced to be burned, and his execution immediately followed at Perth, in 1407, his books and writings being also committed to the flames. Among the qualities of the Duke of Albany, for which he is especially lauded by his priestly historian Wyntoun, was his hatred of all Lollards and heretics, and it was in this manner that his zeal for the church was signalized. To such a governor, indeed, the odium of being a persecutor was trivial compared with the adherence of the clerical order which he was certain to secure by such a sacrifice. But this first Scottish martyrdom of which we have any record was cherished in the hearts of the sufferer's admiring disciples, and was the commencement of a revolution before which mightier potentates than Albany were to be swept away.

While the truce thus continued between England and Scotland the intercourse between the two kingdoms was so close as to give promise of a lasting peace. For this forbearance, indeed, on the part of Scotland, there was abundant motive in the inaptitude of Albany for war, the precarious tenure of his authority, and the captivity of his son in England; while Henry IV., himself a usurper, was unwilling to muster his barons for a Scottish conquest that might have ended in his own dethronement. His experience warned him of the danger that might accrue to his questionable title when his powerful nobles were in the field and at the head of their numerous followers. In the meantime the restlessness of the Scottish knights and nobles, thus bereaved of their favourite occupation, was obliged to find other outlets; and their journeys to England were frequent, either for the purpose of paying homage to their young prince, who was kept in an easy and honourable captivity, or for the display of their prowess in the tournament against the best lances of England. Of all these restless adventurers the most remarkable was Alexander Stewart, Earl of Mar, the portentous commencement of whose public career we have already noticed. Although he had won a noble bride and a broad earldom, as well as the character of a wise, honest, and able councillor, these in his eyes were nothing compared with the stir of enterprise and the rapture of combat, which he was resolved to find, let them be sought where they might. In 1407 he accordingly passed into England with a princely train of sixty riders, composed of

knights, priests, and household attendants, to hold a tournament against the Earl of Kent; and many a gallant course was run, with the usual amount of wounds, and bruises, and "great commendation." The next flight of his erratic course in the following year was to France, where he abode at Paris twelve weeks, keeping open gate and door, that all might enter at pleasure to eat and drink, dance and sing, and where he was held in great admiration by the court and the whole city. But finding such a life too peaceful he joined the Duke of Burgundy, and chiefly contributed by his skill and valour to the duke's victory over the insurgents of Liege; after which (his countess being dead) he married the rich heiress of Doffle in Brabant, and returned to his own country. But his career was as yet far from being ended, and he reappears in due season when his presence was most needed. Even the land was not enough for his adventures, and at a later period he added the vocation of an ancient sea-king to that of a knight-errant, cruising between Berwick and Newcastle, and sweeping up every English vessel in his way, there being neither peace nor truce with England by sea whatever it might be on shore.

When Scotland possessed such turbulent spirits the truce with England could not be permanent, and that it had lasted already so long was chiefly owing to the respective interests of Henry IV. and the Duke of Albany. But the Scots had still some of their old territories to recover, and among these was the castle of Jedburgh, which had remained in the hands of the English ever since the battle of Durham. No sooner, therefore, had the term of truce expired in 1409 than the fierce Borderers of Teviotdale renewed the war, and took this important fortress by storm. It was then resolved, in accordance with the policy of Bruce, to destroy this building, which in the hands of the English had been so offensive a bridle to the district; but the walls and towers were so thick and so strongly cemented that the task of demolishing was found more difficult than that of capturing them. As it would also be a work of great expense as well as labour it was resolved in a parliament held at Perth to raise funds for the purpose, by levying a tax of two pennies upon every hearth in Scotland. But here the Duke of Albany interposed, with language that might have suited an Alfred. No tax, he said, had as yet been levied during the time of his regency, nor should now be levied, lest he should incur the curses of the poor for introducing such an abuse. He then caused the expense to be defrayed out of the royal customs, and by this deed greatly augmented his popularity.

Although the war with England was thus resumed it was followed by no active hostilities of note, with the exception of the capture of Fast Castle, a fortress almost impregnable, built upon a rock on the edge of the sea, and held by an English adventurer named Thomas Holden, a formidable enemy to the Scots both by land and sea. To dislodge this adventurous freebooting chief was no easy task, as the only land approach to his castle was a narrow causeway which a few determined men could have made good against an army. The exploit was undertaken by Patrick of Dunbar, son of the restored Earl of March, and successfully executed by a great effort of valour and skill; but the particulars of the enterprise are not recorded. On the other hand the English were not idle, and Sir Robert Umfraville, their vice-admiral, a chief of that English house which claimed the earldom of Angus, entered the Forth with a strong fleet, swept the shores on either side of the frith, and after capturing fourteen Scottish merchant vessels returned with such store of grain to England, in which there was a dearth of victual, that from this seasonable supply he obtained the homely title of Robin Mendmarket. In another expedition by land he attacked the town of Jedburgh while a fair was held, and after plundering it reduced it to ashes.

But a more formidable event than these petty incursions, as well as more disastrous to Scotland, because it partook of the character of a civil war, was that invasion from the isles which led to the battle of Harlaw. From an early period the Lords of the Isles had been dangerous enemies to Scotland, and even when reduced to submission their homage had been little more than nominal. They ruled like independent sovereigns, and while their power by sea made them almost inaccessible to the kingdom of which they were considered to form a part, their alliances with England during the war of that country with Scotland had often made them formidable to Bruce and his successors. The present revolt or rebellion from that quarter was occasioned by the claim of Donald, Lord of the Isles, to the earldom of Ross, the succession to which had terminated in that fruitful source of feudal controversy and contention, a female line. Euphemia Ross, the sole occupant of the claim, had married Sir Walter Lesley, by whom she had two children, Alexander and Margaret, the former of whom married a daughter of the Duke of Albany, while the latter was married to Donald of the Isles. Alexander, this last earl, who married the daughter of Albany, had no child but a daughter, Euphemia, who thus inherited the earldom; but she was easily induced, while but an inexperienced girl, to resign

her right to John, Earl of Buchan, the second son of Albany, and consequently her own uncle, by becoming a nun. But this unexpected transference, in which the selfish craft of the Scottish regent may be easily detected, roused the indignation of the insular potentate; he declared that Euphemia, the young countess, by taking the veil became dead in law, and that her entrance into a nunnery left his wife Margaret unquestionably the heiress of the earldom, which should thus revert to himself as her husband. His appeal was rejected by Albany, upon which Donald, without wasting time in litigation, resolved to make his title good by force. For this, indeed, while his resources were adequate, the temptation was alluring, for the earldom included the island of Skye, and was so conveniently near his own possessions that it would have rounded his territory into a formidable kingdom. With a wild host of ten thousand islanders he burst into Ross-shire, swearing that he would not only take possession of the county but subdue Aberdeen, Mearns, Angus, and all Fife to the Forth. The people of Ross, who knew and dreaded the power of the islesmen, made little resistance; the men of Dingwall, who gallantly attempted to oppose them, were utterly defeated. The torrent of invasion swept onward to Inverness, and there Donald summoned by proclamation all who favoured his cause or feared his vengeance to repair to his banner and join him in his inroad into the Lowlands. There were men in plenty to respond to such a call, and Moray and Strathbogie were speedily overrun and wasted; Garrioch, a rich district belonging to the earldom of Mar, was plundered; and, flushed with massacre and booty, the islanders and their mountain allies were impatient to arrive at the rich town of Aberdeen, with the pillage of which Donald had promised to reward his followers.

It was fortunate at this crisis for Scotland that Alexander Stewart, Earl of Mar, was in the country instead of rambling abroad in quest of new enemies and adventures. These were now in search of him and within sight of his own castle gates, while the destruction of his own territory was enough to give double edge to his warlike ardour. But the trial was to his heart's liking, and he was already in the field. His force, indeed, was not a tenth part of that of the enemy, but it included the best knights of Mearns and Angus, confident in their courage, discipline, and good armour, while their leader was no stranger to the mode of Highland warfare and the best means of opposing it, having been a captain of mountain catherans before he became a Lowland earl. Instead of waiting for the enemy he advanced to Harlaw, some twenty

miles north-west of Aberdeen, where they were encamped. The disparity of numbers was appalling, but his mail-clad riders had the usual contempt of half-naked troops whose weapons were wooden hide-bound bucklers, swords and pole-axes, short knives, and bows only four feet long. The engagement was commenced by the sheriff of Angus and the constable of Dundee, who led the vanguard of Mar's little army; and they charged with their usual weight and impetuosity, breaking the front rank of the islesmen asunder, and clearing an opening for the closely-arrayed levelled lances that followed in their track. But they were met with a spirit of doggedness and daring equal to such an onset, and the unflinching islanders were ready to sacrifice themselves in heaps if they could but overwhelm at the same time the barbed warsteed and its proud iron-sheathed rider. The whole chivalry of the Lowlands of Aberdeenshire, the barons of Angus and Mearns, and the hardy well-trained burgesses of Aberdeen were soon in the heart of the opposite throng; but it was only to be surrounded and closely pressed upon by overwhelming odds to whom flight was unknown and who scorned to cry for quarter. At last discipline asserted its superiority over numbers; the army of Donald was disarrayed by its own fierce courage and eagerness; and after this desperate fight had been maintained till nightfall the island chief reluctantly withdrew his broken ranks to the shelter of the neighbouring hills, while their adversaries were so weary that they could offer no pursuit. But there was little triumph among the victors, for their best and bravest had fallen in the desperate struggle. The chief of these were Sir James Scrymgeour of Dudhope, constable of Dundee and royal standard-bearer, Lord Ogilvy, sheriff of Angus, Sir Alexander Irving of Drum, Sir Robert Davidson, provost of Aberdeen, Sir Robert Maule of Panmure, Sir Thomas Moray, Sir Alexander Straiton of Lauriston, and many other knights connected with the noble families of Scotland. When the Earl of Mar encamped on the field, which he was compelled to do for very weariness, it was in the midst of 500 corpses, the remains of his gallant followers, for of his little army about a half had perished. It must have been, indeed, with anxious forebodings that this renowned leader mustered his scanty troops of worn-out and wounded soldiers and prepared for the attack which was anticipated on the following morning. But well was it for them that no attack was designed. Although Donald had cheaply purchased the destruction of so many brave enemies by the loss of twice the number of his own clansmen and followers, and

was therefore in a better condition to renew the fight than his opponents, this terrible foretaste of the resistance he might expect in continuing his advance into the Lowlands seems to have disheartened him, and he judged it better to retreat to his own territories, which he was enabled to effect without pursuit. This eventful battle of Harlaw was fought on the eve of St. James, the 24th of July, 1411, and it was long after remembered in the traditions and celebrated in the songs of Scotland.¹ And it was indeed worthy of commemoration when we consider the important political consequences that were pending on the issue. It was a revival of the question whether Scotland should be a divided kingdom torn asunder by different antagonistic races, and reduced to feebleness and vassalage by their contentions. As such, the island lord was not to be let off with the honours of a doubtful contest or permitted to gather strength to renew the war; and after the heirs of those who had fallen had been exempted from the usual feudal fines and permitted, if minors, to enter into immediate possession, Albany on the following summer raised three armies to drive Donald from the mainland into his insular strongholds. The expedition was successful, and after a brief war of various changes the Lord of the Isles was obliged to renounce his claims to the earldom of Ross, become a vassal of the Scottish crown, and give hostages for his fealty. In the whole of this transaction the conduct of the Duke of Albany would have been noble and patriotic had it not been for his evident solicitude to secure to his son the contested earldom.²

But a silent unobtrusive event, scarcely less important than the consolidation of the kingdom, was at this time in progress in Scotland. This was the establishment of its first university, the University of St. Andrews. As yet, amidst the din of arms and the struggle for the recovery of the national independence, there had been little opportunity for the cultivation of learning; but now that a pause had occurred the want was felt, and due exertion made to supply it. In 1410 four learned doctors had commenced a course of teaching in canon law, and three in philosophy and logic, in St. Andrews; but although this was a large complement of teachers and lecturers the institution could not be established into a university without a papal bull, which was brought from Rome in February, 1413. Its coming was welcomed as a national

triumph, and all the church bells of the city rang out their loudest peals. On the morning of the following day, which was Sunday, the bulls being read in presence of Henry Wardlaw, Bishop of St. Andrews, the priests, and the attendant multitudes, a procession to the church was made, *Te Deum* was sung, and high mass celebrated with a splendour unwonted in Scotland. Such was the enthusiasm and such the mode in which the first public entrance of science and literature was welcomed into the country. The day having been thus celebrated with religious solemnities, the evening was devoted to festival, in which the streets blazed with bonfires and rang with songs and the pealing of bells, and with abundance of dancing and wine-drinking.³

The death of Henry IV. and the accession of his renowned son Henry V., which occurred in March, 1413, produced no change in the relations between Scotland and England; for while Albany was still held in check by the imprisonment of his son Murdoch, for whose release he was anxious, as well as the captivity of Prince James, which he was equally desirous to have continued, Henry V. was fully employed in preparations for asserting his claims to the crown of France, which he alleged he inherited from Edward III. Albany, indeed, was obliged to feign an earnestness which he did not feel in negotiating for the freedom of James; but these attempts, as well as his more sincere ones in behalf of his son, were equally unavailing with the chivalrous King of England. Henry must have been aware of the impediments which Scotland might oppose to his designs on France, and would naturally be unwilling to forego his advantages and expose the country, at his departure, to the risk of a Scottish invasion. But let the interests or the authority of the two rulers be what they might, it was impossible to prevent such kingdoms as England and Scotland from coming occasionally into hostile collision. These encounters, in themselves insignificant, only served to keep alive the national emulation and hatred, without in any way promoting the welfare of either country. Thus the Earl of Douglas made an incursion into England and burned the town of Penrith, and in requital the English assailed and burned the town of Dumfries. At length Albany was successful in obtaining the liberation of his son, Earl Murdoch, who was exchanged for Henry Percy, the son of Hotspur, who since the death of his father and grandfather had taken refuge in Scotland. Having thus succeeded in his

¹ A military march called the "Battle of Harlaw" was a favourite in Scotland till the beginning of the seventeenth century. An ancient ballad of the same name has been published in Ramsay's *Evergreen* and elsewhere.

² *Scotichron.* xv. 21.

³ *Scotichron.* xv. 22. Bower, as was meet, devotes a whole chapter to this happy event and the joy it occasioned.

favourite project, the Duke of Albany thought fit to wear the mask no longer, and after the return of the victor of Agincourt to the Continent he resolved to enter into a double war with England by invading the country and sending powerful reinforcements to the baffled and dispirited French. Henry V. had hitherto acted in good faith toward the Scottish government; he had even shown an inclination to liberate Prince James, who was now of age, upon easy terms; while a war with England such as Albany contemplated, besides its manifest danger, was certain to drain the country of its best defenders. But the Scottish governor was not a man to pause upon such considerations. Having recovered his eldest son, in whom his rule would be perpetuated, he was now ready to damage the prosperity and risk the safety of his country by giving full scope to the belligerent ardour of his nobles wherever it might carry them.

The war was commenced by an expedition into England which he resolved to lead in person, and the army which he raised for the purpose was such as to promise full success. But even the commencement of his campaign, like his other military proceedings, was in the midst of uncertainty and blunders; for so little had he informed himself of the state of England and its means of defence that he believed its chief force had been transported to France, instead of the small select army which Henry had judged sufficient. Thus Albany had scarcely commenced the siege of Berwick than he learned that the Dukes of Bedford and Exeter, to whom the protection of the Borders had been intrusted by their sovereign, were on their march against him; and although fame no doubt has greatly magnified their army, which is said to have consisted of 100,000 men, yet they were enough to frighten the governor from his enterprise. He ordered a hasty retreat; and thus 60,000 Scots are represented as returning at full speed into their own country, without an advantage won or even a defeat sustained. Their countrymen were astounded at such an unwonted incident, which they were unable to comprehend, and being ignorant of the state of preparation in England to repel it, this invasion was characterized under the title of the "Fool (foolish) Raid."

Of a very different character, however, was that part of the war which was waged by the Scots against England upon a foreign field. By the victories of Henry V. France had been compelled to receive him for her master; while the Dauphin and his handful of adherents were obliged to skulk in corners reduced to the last extremity. In their distress they sent the

Duke of Vendome to the Scottish court to implore assistance, and the appeal was not made in vain. It was addressed to men who were alive to the charms of foreign adventure, and ready to meet their hereditary foes upon any soil; and it held out allurements both of gain and renown to which these stirring and high-born but somewhat impoverished magnates were never insensible. The difficulty of transportation, indeed, would have marred the enterprise at the outset; but for this the French had provided through an arrangement with the courts of Castile and Arragon, by which forty ships were to be sent for the conveyance of the Scottish troops to France. No sooner did Henry learn in France of this new storm that was about to burst upon him than he sent orders to England for the muster of a fleet to intercept this Scottish armament; but the mandate either came too late or was overlooked. Seven thousand Scottish soldiers were speedily embarked under the command of John Stewart, Earl of Buchan, Albany's second son, and Archibald Douglas, Earl of Wigtown, accompanied by the choicest of the Scottish chivalry; and on landing at Rochelle they joined the army of the Dauphin in Languedoc. These auxiliaries having thus eluded him, Henry's next precaution was to send for Prince James, whom the Scots had recognized in parliament as their king on the death of Robert III., and whose authority, he thought, would be sufficient to send back the Scots to their own country. But on arriving at the English camp and learning the service required of him, James rejected the proposal. His intention was to serve under Henry as a private knight, but not to issue, as a mere captive king, those orders which his subjects were not likely to obey.

As the conduct of these bold adventurers forms an important episode in Scottish history, we shall follow its events to the close, although thereby we must diverge for a short space from the chronological order of the narrative. On their first arrival in France the Scots had little opportunity to signalize themselves in consequence of the miserable depression of their allies, who hitherto, as often as they had shown themselves in the field, had been baffled and dispersed. But at the same time they were so unreasonable as to blame the Scotch for this inertness, because they did not drive the English out of France; and they carried complaints to the Dauphin that these Scots were nothing better than mutton-devourers and wine-swillers. At length Henry, who had returned to England, left his brother the Duke of Clarence in command of the army; and the young prince, eager to distinguish himself in his brother's ab-

sence, advanced to lay siege to Baugé in Anjou. But hearing that the Scots, who had been intrusted with the defence of that province, were encamped at a short distance and unaware of his arrival, he hoped to surprise them. He started from the table, exclaiming, "Let us set upon them; they are ours! Let none follow me but the men-at-arms!" They rushed on with rash valour, as if victory was to give a relish to their banquet; but on reaching the village of Little Baugé, they met with such an obstinate resistance from a few French soldiers who defended the church that Buchan had time to occupy a small bridge across a deep rivulet that formed the main approach to his encampment. The passage was forced by the English, but their disordered ranks were met and encountered by the Scots who were drawn up to receive them. A miserable rout was the consequence; Clarence, who was conspicuous by a golden coronet upon his helmet, was singled out by Sir Thomas Swinton and wounded in the face by a lance-thrust, and immediately after he was stretched lifeless by a blow of the Earl of Buchan's mace. With him were also slain about two thousand English, among whom were the Earl of Kent, and the Lords Roos and Grey, while the Earls of Somerset, Huntingdon, and Strafford, the Lords Fitzwalter, and Thomas, brother of Somerset, with several of knightly rank were taken prisoners, the victors only losing twelve men. This defeat was of serious importance, as it was the first which the English had sustained, and was calculated to raise the confidence of the French by finding that their enemies were not invincible. "What do you think now of these mutton-eaters and wine-bibbers?" cried the exulting Dauphin to the tale-bearers of his wandering court. "Verily these Scots are notable antidotes to the English!" cried Pope Martin V., who was devoted to the cause of France.¹ The Earl of Buchan was rewarded with the important office of constable of the kingdom. The Dauphin, who soon after was proclaimed king by the death of his father, but whose rule was so circumscribed that he was called "the little King of Bourges," from the name of the town in which he resided, was compelled mainly to depend upon the valour of these foreign allies. The war in France was now so popular in Scotland that when Buchan returned to marry the daughter of Archibald, Earl of Douglas, he easily persuaded that formidable warrior to embark with him at the

head of five thousand Scottish soldiers. For this seasonable aid Douglas was invested with the title and dukedom of Touraine soon after his arrival in France. A temporary lull in the French war occurred in consequence of the death of Henry V.; but it was soon renewed by the activity of his equally brave and able brother the Duke of Bedford, to whom Henry had committed the regency of France. In the absence of Buchan, who had not yet returned with his father-in-law from Scotland, Stewart of Darnley, the constable's kinsman, who had been invested with the lordship of Aubigny, was left in command of the Scottish forces. The young French king, whose counsels were characterized throughout by imbecility and folly, commanded Stewart to march for the recovery of Crevant, which had just been taken by the Earls of Salisbury and Suffolk, and reinforced him with nine thousand French soldiers under the command of the Marshal of Severac. But aware of the great inferiority of his troops in spirit and discipline, and trusting wholly to the valour of the Scots, he ordered the marshal to spare his own forces, and let their allies bear the chief brunt of the engagement. This selfish order was too faithfully obeyed. Under the Earl of Salisbury the English army advanced to the river Yonne, behind which the French and Scottish troops were skilfully posted; and having forced the passage they advanced to the encounter. But scarcely had the battle commenced when the French were so quickly withdrawn by Severac that their retreat became a flight, and left to themselves the Scots were assailed in front by the English and in flank and rear by the Burgundians. But though thus forsaken by all their allies except a few French knights who scorned to desert them, the Scots defended themselves, and only yielded when more than half their number were killed or taken prisoners. Among the captives was Lord Darnley, who had lost an eye in the fight, and who was soon after exchanged for the Marshal of Burgundy.

It would have been well for the Scots if this disaster had tamed their love of adventure and their devotedness to the interests of France; but Douglas soon arrived, by which the Scottish force was raised to 7000 men, who under such a leader were not likely to languish for lack of occupation. This was afforded in the summer of 1424, the year that succeeded the battle of Crevant, in consequence of the Duke of Bedford having laid siege to the town of Ivry in Normandy. On being ordered by King Charles of France to relieve it, about 7000 Scots and as many Italians and French marched within sight of Ivry, but found the English too strongly

¹ The saying of the pontiff was thought so worthy of commemoration that it was preserved in the following monkish distich:—

"Pontifex supremus Martinus fert vice quintus,
Antidotum Scoti Anglorum sunt bene noti."

posted to be assailed, upon which they were obliged to leave the town to its fate. But they were able to gain the town of Verneuil, about thirty miles distant, after a two days' siege. Enraged at this loss, Bedford hurried by a rapid march to Verneuil, and on arriving before the walls he sent a message to the Earl of Douglas, who in derision had nicknamed him "John with the leaden sword," telling him that he had come to drink wine with him, and that he would wait where he was until he had enjoyed that honour. In the same spirit Douglas answered that he was most welcome, and bade him come quickly, as he had crossed over from Scotland to enjoy such a meeting. In this jocular manner the leaders of armies during a chivalrous age were wont to preface those great movements upon which not only their own lives but the destiny of nations depended.

A war council was meantime held within the walls of Verneuil, where all was contradiction and confusion. Nominally, indeed, the whole force was under the command of the Earl of Buchan, as Constable of France, and under him the Duke of Touraine, whose followers composed the chief strength of the army; but the French lords and captains would take no orders from the Scots, whom they hated and pretended to despise. They were impatient to be in the field instead of awaiting the dulness of a siege, and when they rushed out of the town the Scots had no alternative but to follow, if they would save their allies from being cut in pieces. Having selected their ground, which was favourable for battle, as the town covered one of their flanks, the French, taught by their past losses, resolved to abide the encounter chiefly on foot, leaving for this purpose their baggage and horses behind them, and retaining only two thousand French and Milanese men-at-arms on horseback. The English, who were equal in numbers and the choice of their nation, were drawn up in front of them; the archers planted their stakes, as they had done at Agincourt, to prevent the in-fall of cavalry; and the fate of either army depended upon that which should hazard the first onset. The advice of Douglas was to stand on the defensive; but the Count of Narbonne, snatching up a standard, cried that the glory of the French arms was sullied by this remissness, and shouting "Mountjoye St. Denis!" he rushed down upon the English, followed by the whole line, while both Scots and Italians were swept along by the torrent. The whole army, indeed, was let loose at the same moment, and such was the fury of their charge that the English archers in front were hurled backward and mixed with those in the rear. But they were driven thither in the

very nick of time, for they reinforced their brethren who were on the point of being overpowered by a desperate onset of the French cavalry. The united archery here planted their stakes, and kept up their terrible discharges so closely that the horsemen were driven from the field, after which the whole body took up their station in the front line, and plied the Italians so successfully that they also were put to flight. After this the struggle was mainly confined to the Scots, who resisted to the last, and were struck down in heaps. The fight continued three hours, and three thousand Scots fell. Here also Douglas fell, while contending with that surpassing bravery which had so often won the admiration of his victors; and with him perished the Earl of Buchan, who had been invested with the leadership of the French armies when it could be nothing but a painful and profitless pre-eminence. Nor was their resistance wholly unavailing, as was attested by the bodies of sixteen hundred of the conquerors of France that lay dead on the field. Such was the close of this fatal expedition, which so effectually cured the Scots of their passion for adventures upon the Continent that they ceased to take a part in its wars, and no large body of troops was afterwards sent to France whatever might be the subject of contest. That kingdom, indeed, which Scottish prowess had so vainly attempted to save, was to be delivered neither by warrior nor statesman, but by a peasant girl. Those Scots who survived this fatal field of Verneuil were afterwards collected into a single brigade, and under the command of Sir John Stewart, the Constable of Scotland, endeavoured to uphold the tottering interests of Charles; but at the battle of Herrings, five years afterwards, they were again so utterly defeated, chiefly through the headstrong perversity of their allies, that only a few hundreds survived. They were now too insignificant to excite envy, and when better days arrived their good services were remembered by the king, who composed of them the body-guard known in French history under the title of the Scottish Archers.¹

We now return to the regular course of the narrative. After the Fool Raid, by which his popularity was greatly endangered, the Duke of Albany's course was so pacific during the brief remainder of his government that nothing of him is mentioned but his death, which occurred at the palace of Stirling on the 3rd of September, 1420, when he was about eighty years old. Reckoning from the death of his brother Robert III. he had held the entire rule of Scot-

¹ Monstrelet; Barante; Chartier; Bersy; *Scotichron.*

land fifteen years; but, as we have seen, he had enjoyed scarcely less than regal authority since his election to the office of governor in 1389. His panegyrists, Bower and Wyntoun, are immoderate in their praise of the uprightness of his character and the benefits of his administration; but the eulogies of the monkish historians, both of England and Scotland, are too well understood to be very highly appreciated. To wield the sceptre according to the dictation of the church, and enrich the clergy by liberal grants and immunities, were sufficient to cover a multitude of royal sins, or even to exalt them into virtues. But these grateful recorders, in narrating the actions of their favourite heroes, are compelled in their simplicity to betray the truth, and to show that the potentates whom they so largely endow were neither wise rulers nor just magistrates, nor even devout virtuous Christians. Weighed therefore by his deeds Albany merits the opprobrium which has settled upon his memory; and although the country was kept in comparative peace during his regency it was only by those selfish concessions and shifts that were to last but a short lifetime, and which were certain to return with double weight and violence upon the generation that followed.

On the death of the governor, Murdoch, Earl of Fife, and now Duke of Albany, succeeded to the office as if by unquestionable inheritance. A movement for the liberation of their lawful sovereign might have been expected, or at least a formal election of Duke Murdoch to the regency; but the nobles, who had grown so rich and powerful during the administration of his father, were little disposed to compromise their advantages by the recognition of either king or parliament. He was indeed a governor fitted for their purposes, as he had neither the talents nor the craft of his predecessor, while his indolence was such that he would be an unresisting puppet in the hands of those who had raised him. Amidst this remissness of the Scottish nobility in behalf of their prince there was, however, at least one honourable exception; this was Archibald, Earl of Douglas, the most powerful of their number, and who therefore might have been least expected to engage in a transaction which, if successful, would have subjected him to a superior. But it is difficult upon ordinary rules to account for the actions of such an impulsive, belligerent, and unlucky character as the Mars of Homildon and Shrewsbury, who now seemed as earnest for the interests of James as he had been opposed to those of his brother the Duke of Rothesay. Soon after the accession of Duke Murdoch to office Douglas made an irruption into England,

took the town of Alnwick, and burned it to the ground. On the following year (1420) Henry V., when at York, invited the earl to a conference; and the latter, with an eye to the deliverance of his own sovereign, offered to serve Henry in his wars against France with two hundred mounted men-at-arms and as many mounted archers for a yearly pension of two hundred pounds. But the negotiation, we know not wherefore, came to nothing, and the earl waited his time when he was to repair to France with a different object, and perish upon the field of Verneuil. As for James, he too, as we have seen, repaired to France, but under the banner of England; and Henry, who had hoped much from this union in neutralizing the exertions of the Scottish reinforcements, promised that three months after his return to England he should be permitted to visit his own country for a limited time, on giving hostages from among the Scottish nobles for his coming back to captivity. This proposal was conducted under the mediation of Earl Douglas after the failure of his own, and he no doubt hoped that it would prepare the way for the prince's final liberation; but this fair prospect was extinguished by the unexpected death of Henry before his return from France; and James, who followed his bier as chief mourner, remained a captive as before.

Of this unfortunate victim of a selfish policy, who had now attained the age of ripened manhood, and was so soon to enter upon his public career, it is time to give a more special notice. At the early age of fourteen, while his literary education was hopefully conducted under the learned Wardlaw, Bishop of St. Andrews, and his chivalrous training under the gallant Earl of Orkney, an emergency as abrupt and terrible as the wildest midnight alarm required that he should be hurried from his home to the guardianship of foreigners and strangers. We have already noticed his unjust capture, his more iniquitous detention, the heartless glee with which his seizure was welcomed by Henry IV., and the death-anguish it planted in the heart of his bereaved father. But here, happily, the ignoble triumph of Henry ended, and he resolved that the prisoner, in compensation for his liberty, should enjoy the advantages of a learned and princely tuition. He was accordingly intrusted to the keeping of Sir John Pelham, constable of Pevensey Castle, one of the most accomplished knights of the age, who was at once to be his jailer and preceptor; and under such a guardian James was enabled to acquire that solid learning as well as those courtly graces which made him, although destined to become the sovereign of a poor and rude coun-

try, such a king as the most advanced thrones of Europe could not equal. In such a case it was well for him that his condition as a prisoner, and his seclusion from public affairs, allowed him full time and opportunity for such a ripening without exposure to those youthful temptations under which his brother had been utterly wrecked, and even the conqueror of Agincourt grievously stained. James was skilled in the French and Latin languages, and he was trained in theology, oratory, and grammar, and the civil and canon laws. But independently of being merely learned according to the highest estimate of the age he was one of the best of poets, having Chaucer and Gower for his models, the last of whom he greatly surpassed, while the first he almost equalled. Besides his skill in chivalrous and warlike exercises, which still constituted the chief portion of a noble and princely education, James excelled in those stirring sports that required both strength and activity; and in handling the bow, throwing the hammer, and putting the stone we are told that no man in his dominions excelled him. These various endowments were set off by a graceful figure and handsome countenance; he was of middle size, but broad-chested; his arms were long and muscular, his flanks thin and spare, and his limbs beautifully formed. Such is the testimony of the old chroniclers, which is fully confirmed by the subsequent course of his eventful history; and from the portraiture it will be seen that even already he was "every inch a king," and one whom Scotland would have been proud to welcome. But from year to year he had as yet been compelled to linger on in captivity, mainly through the selfishness of his uncle, who rejoiced in his absence, and made no effort to procure his freedom; and when the son of Albany succeeded so peacefully to the office of governor it might well have appeared to James that his subjects had forgot him, and that his detention in England would be perpetual. Amidst this natural yearning for freedom, and sickness of hope deferred, it was well for him that, in addition to his books and studies, his sports and amusements, he possessed in high excellence an art which more than others can lighten the cloud of despondency and soothe the loneliness of a prison. This was music, in which he appears to have excelled as much as he did in poetry, and his minstrelsy could at any time people his solitude, and create for himself a kingdom which he could settle and govern at will. And was he happier amidst the stern regalities of Stirling or Holyrood than among the midsummer nights' dreams of Pevensey Castle or the bowers of Windsor? Even had he never been king of Scotland James

would still have won general estimation and secured a lasting name, whether as a learned scholar, a brave accomplished knight, or a poet of the first order. Nay, merely as a wandering minstrel from town to tower he could have framed and sung such ballads as form the chief incentives to great deeds, and mould the national character of a people more effectually than the labours of king or legislator.

From this alluring picture we turn once more to the "counterfeit presentment" of his cousin—to Duke Murdoch, who had been thrust upward into an elevation which perhaps he sought not, and for which he was wholly unqualified. His imbecility and sluggishness were strangely in contrast with the turbulent court with which he was surrounded; the nobles used him merely as their factor and bailiff, while they farmed the royal revenues and the wealth of the kingdom for their own advantage; and far from being able to govern such an aristocracy the unhappy man soon found that he could not even rule his own children. It has been alleged that this last evil, which so nearly affected his own comfort and love of quiet, was the circumstance which chiefly induced him to abdicate his troublesome office in behalf of the rightful heir, and a popular tale illustrative of this fact has every appearance of credibility. The duke, we are told, had a favourite falcon which his son Walter had often begged from him, but in vain; and irritated by these refusals the young man at last snatched the bird from his father's hand, and twisted its neck. At this the insulted parent sorrowfully exclaimed, "Since you pay me so little respect I must invite him whom both must obey."

The situation of the two kingdoms was favourable for the negotiation which was now set on foot for the liberation of James. The Scots were weary of the lawlessness and feudal exactions of the nobles, and wished to have a king set over them; while the nobility themselves were probably weary of such a passive tool as Murdoch, and desirous of carrying on their quarrels for place and profit under a more respectable superior. A king by right and title as well as power and influence must have been longed for by all parties after the tedious interregnum which had now settled into the very dregs of a national government. England was equally willing for the restoration of the Scottish sovereign. The selfish purposes of his detention had been served, and nothing farther was to be gained from it, while its continuation could only make them odious in the eyes of Europe, and produce new grounds of contention. The Duke of Bedford also, who on the death of Henry V. had been intrusted with

the task of securing the conquest of France, could not fail to perceive that his difficulties would be increased by the alliance of that country with Scotland, and that James, now half an Englishman, would be more likely to remain neutral in the strife, or even ally himself with the cause of England.

In this condition of mutual agreement between the two governments the negotiation for James' return to Scotland was not likely to be slow or uncertain. It commenced only a few months after the death of Henry V., and when a conference had been held between the ambassadors of England and Scotland at Pontefract on the 12th of May, 1423, James himself being permitted to attend it, the final treaty was soon after settled at London. The English could not honourably urge their demands under the name of ransom, as the capture of James had occurred during a season of truce, and was indeed a downright violation of the laws of every country whether civilized or barbarous. This term was therefore waived by the English commissioners as well as the full right which it implied; and their demands, though still sufficiently selfish, were limited to the expense of the prince's maintenance during the eighteen years of his entertainment in England. This was fixed at the sum of forty thousand pounds of English money, to be paid in annual instalments of ten thousand marks each; and until the whole debt was liquidated certain hostages, the members of noble Scottish families, were to reside in England at their own expense. As further guarantees the four principal towns of Scotland, Edinburgh, Perth, Dundee, and Aberdeen, came under obligation to discharge the debt in full should the money otherwise not be forthcoming. A still more important matter

to England at this period was to procure such a close and friendly alliance with Scotland as might detach the latter country from the interests of France; and as this could be best ensured by a royal marriage it was proposed that James should espouse some noble English lady previous to his departure. To him this was no unwelcome addition, for during his captivity he had fallen in love with Joanna, daughter of the Earl of Somerset, and closely related to the royal family of England, being grand-daughter of John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster. They were married in the church of St. Mary Overy in Southwark, and the nuptial feast was given by Joanna's uncle, the rich and powerful Cardinal Beaufort. As the first-fruits of this union ten thousand marks of the debt, equal to a year's instalment, was remitted in lieu of a royal dowry, and a truce of seven years was concluded between the two kingdoms. All being thus amicably settled, James and his beautiful bride repaired to their kingdom, attended by a splendid train of English lords and barons, and were met at Durham by three hundred of the nobles and chief gentlemen of Scotland, who were impatient to welcome their long-lost sovereign to his dominions. On his entry into Scotland the same affectionate ardour was everywhere displayed, an ardour similar to that which had greeted David II. on his return from imprisonment in the Tower of London. He and his queen were crowned in the abbey church of Scone on the 21st of May, 1424; and that no observance might be wanting, Duke Murdoch, who had gladly abdicated his office, seated James with his own hands upon the coronation seat, which served instead of the stone of destiny that was still in London, and waiting the arrival of James's descendants.

CHAPTER VII.

HISTORY OF SOCIETY (1329-1424).

Slow progress of Scottish society after the death of Robert Bruce—Obstacles by which this progress was retarded—Condition of the national parliament at this period—Permanent establishment of the third estate in parliament—Devices adopted for non-attendance—Continuation of the national poverty—Causes of the continuation—Prohibitions laid by England upon Scottish commerce with the Continent—Rudeness and scantiness of the mechanical arts—Scottish coinage—Its speedy and extreme deterioration—Scottish chivalry—Its progress—Arms and equipments of the knights—Absence of tournaments in Scotland—Causes of their absence—Introduction of gunpowder—First appearance of cannons in the Scottish wars with England—Military equipments of the commons—Military discipline—Scottish inroads into England—War laws—Poverty of the Scottish nobles—Necessity of war for their support—Warlike education of their families—Sports and amusements of the nobility—Their meals and banquets—Literary progress during this period—Early Scottish historians of this age—John de Fordun—Walter Bower—John Barbour—Andrew Wyntoun—Difficulties of the Scottish scholarship of the period—University of St. Andrews founded by Henry Wardlaw.

Notwithstanding the victories of Bruce by which the land had been restored to freedom, and his labours as a king and legislator by which order and regularity seemed to have been fully

established, the course of political events was still so unfavourable as to retard the progress of Scottish society. The country was in that unfortunate predicament which made its welfare mainly dependent upon the life of a single individual; and when he had passed away those evils returned which no human foresight or care could avert. His wise and energetic rule was succeeded by a minority, during which Scotland was once more torn to pieces under the double strife of hostile invasion and internal dissension. Events were little benefited when the regal authority was established; for scarcely had the young king ascended the throne when he was hurled from his seat and thrown into an English prison; and when, after long delay, he recovered his freedom it was only to prove himself one of the most inefficient of Scottish sovereigns. Even the establishment of the Stewart dynasty was unfortunate at its earlier stage for the nation, as from the constitutional indolence of its two first sovereigns that undue ascendancy of the great nobles was permanently established which occasioned so much disaster and bloodshed, and whose tyranny was so difficult and so late in its suppression. This brief compend of the political history of the period will show how little was still to be expected for the welfare and improvement of the community at large.

In the account of the Scottish parliament given in the preceding period of our history we had occasion to notice the introduction of the popular element by the admission of burgesses as representatives. It was in this way that the great state council, hitherto composed only of nobles and clergy, properly became what we are accustomed to consider a parliament. This admission of the delegates or representatives of the people continued till the death of Robert Bruce to be recognized as an essential rule in the convention of the national assembly. But deeds soon followed in which the will of the people was not to be consulted, as it was certain that their consent would not be obtained. A Scottish parliament, or at least the semblance of one, was necessary to ratify the shameful surrender by Edward Baliol of the national independence into the hands of Edward; but though a meeting for that purpose was convoked in 1333, the burghs and their representatives were purposely omitted. At all events no mention is made of them in the transactions which followed; and this parliament, instead of being a national meeting, appears to have been only a muster of the adherents of Baliol, with the English commissioner presiding over them. It is not wonderful, therefore, that its decisions were obeyed only as long as the armies of Eng-

land were at hand to enforce them. During the season of anarchy and struggle which followed, extending over a period of twenty years, there is no further mention of Scottish parliaments, their only substitutes being the arbitrary commands of Edward III. and the party of Baliol on the one hand, and on the other the hurried meetings of the Scottish patriots for the election of a regent or provision for the national defence. But the time at length arrived for the recognition of the people and the established right of their representatives to a seat in parliament. And this, also, as in the case of their original admission, was under the pressure of an imperious necessity. David II. was to be ransomed from English captivity; but the exorbitant sum demanded by the captor could not be raised without the aid of the Scottish burghs. Accordingly, in the parliament assembled in 1357, to treat about the royal ransom, the representatives of the seventeen royal burghs took part as the third estate in the deliberations; and when, after long procrastination and delay, the price of the king's liberty was settled, it was the merchants and burgesses of the four richest towns—Edinburgh, Perth, Dundee, and Aberdeen—that became bound on the part of the Scottish merchants at large for its due payment. From this period the establishment of the third estate as an essential portion of the Scottish parliament was neither questioned nor interrupted.

In Scotland, however, as well as in England, the honour of a seat in parliament at this time does not appear to have been fully appreciated. Accordingly, unless the emergency was personal, or otherwise of the utmost national importance, the prelate or noble preferred a residence on his own territory, where he lived and ruled like a king; and the merchant to confine himself to the mart and look after his precarious ventures. To travel to Edinburgh for parliamentary meetings, especially when the way was long and the roads rough and dangerous, or to give attendance until the multiplied sittings were closed, was too much for the patience of such a rude age, more especially when the allurements of eloquence were awanting, and the glory of a tourney of words despised. Many a device was therefore adopted either to excuse their appearance or to shorten their stay. The simplest plan was speedily adopted, which was to discharge the duty by proxy—to appoint special committees, by which the representatives themselves might be represented, and the parliamentary duties discharged in accordance with their own sentiments and wishes. Accordingly, in the parliament of 1369, after certain members had been appointed to manage the business on hand, the

rest buckled on their spurs and hied them to their homes. This device appeared so excellent, that on the following year, although matters of the utmost public moment were at stake, their settlement was devolved upon two standing committees, the one consisting of barons and clergy alone, and the other of only six clergymen, fourteen barons, and sixteen burgesses.¹

At the commencement of the present period there was perhaps more wealth in Scotland in the form of silver and gold than could have been found at any former date. This abundance had accrued from the successful inroads into England, in which spoil was plentifully gathered and large contributions levied. But still more especially it arose from the immense plunder gathered at Bannockburn, and the ransom of the noble captives who fell into the hands of the victors. Scotland thus possessed a capital with which her trade both foreign and domestic might have been renewed under more favourable auspices than ever. But scarcely had the Bruce been cold in his tomb when the war was renewed, and the Scots were obliged once more to contend not merely for their national independence, but for their homes, their daily bread, and their lives. Under such circumstances a people are neither in a temper for traffic nor in a condition to get profitable customers. The long war during the minority of David II., the disastrous defeat at Nevil's Cross, and finally the enormous ransom exacted for the liberation of the royal captive, soon made the victorious hoards of Scotland revert to their former possessors, so that the country became apparently as poor as ever. Nor were matters amended by the recovery of its captive king, as his inefficient reign, the maintenance of the noble hostages whom the Scots were obliged to send to England, and the frequent expensive journeys both of David and the barons, only increased the drainage and aggravated the national poverty.

At the renewal of the war one of the first steps of Edward III. was to close the foreign ports against Scottish traffic as far as his influence extended. The Earl of Flanders was therefore urged with the same application which had been so frequently repeated during the reign of Bruce. This, indeed, was now the more necessary in consequence of the formidable operations of the Scots against England by sea, in which they were powerfully aided by the resources, shipping, and nautical skill of the Flemings, who had an old account to settle against England and were glad of an opportunity to enforce it. By this form of privateering which the Scottish war had assumed the English were

more seriously aggrieved by sea than on land; for while the Scoto-Belgian fleets swept the coasts of England and held the country in constant alarm, the merchant ships of foreign countries kept aloof from the fear of being captured by these roving indefatigable privateers. While the Scots were thus enabled to retaliate for their losses on land, Edward bitterly complained to his naval commanders that they allowed these pirates to haunt the coasts unchecked and carry off captures even in their very presence.² Such was now the chief foreign trade of Scotland; and it was found so alluring to the warlike taste of the age, as well as so profitable, that the sailors of other maritime communities were eager to share in it. This we find when in 1336 Edward III. was obliged to write to the King of Norway, desiring him not to allow his subjects to lend their ships for hire to the Scots, who were his rebels and enemies. But this naval preponderance of Scotland, which had started up so suddenly during the minority and rule of David II., appears to have been extinguished as quickly; for when Sir Robert Umfraville (or Robin Mendmarket) entered the Frith of Forth in 1410 and carried off so large a booty he appears to have met with little or no resistance.

To this brief account of the mercantile resources of Scotland during the present period and the channels into which they were alienated we subjoin a few incidental notices, which only serve to show that its commerce was not utterly extinct. Besides its wool and skins its pearls were still an article of exportation; but these, being of inferior value, were prohibited in France from being set along with oriental ones except in large ornaments for churches. The trade in cattle (probably black cattle) was at this early date a source of profit to the Scots, and was carried not only into England during intervals of truce but also to the Continent; and a safe-conduct of this period granted by the King of England to a company of Scottish drovers allows them to travel through his kingdom or his foreign dominions for a year, with their servants and their horses, oxen, cows, and other goods and merchandise.³ At the Scottish parliament, assembled in 1357 to treat of the ransom of David II., we find the following seventeen towns represented, making it probable that at this time they were the wealthiest in the kingdom, viz.:—Edinburgh, Dundee, Cupar, Stirling, Dumbarton, Dumfries, Perth, Inverkeithing, St. Andrews, Linlithgow, Rutherglen, Peebles, Aberdeen, Crail, Montrose, Haddington, Lanark.

¹ Robertson's *Parliamentary Records*.

² *Fœdera*, v. 4; *Rutuli Scot.* vol. i.

³ *Fœdera*, v. 6.

As for the manufactures and handicrafts of Scotland at this time they were in so poor a condition that such articles of daily and common use as horse-shoes, harness, saddles, and bridles had to be imported from Flanders. This we learn from the testimony of Froissart, who visited Scotland in 1360. If such was the need in essentials like these, what must have been the condition of the industrial implements and household furniture of the Scots? It gives a startling idea of the arrest laid upon Scottish progress by the ambition of Edward I. and his successors. And severely were they punished when the comforts of the English homes were carried off by the red-handed invaders to stock their own cabins. This inferiority in mechanical skill or materials for its exercise was especially remarkable in the fabrication of weapons, so that Sir David Lindsay, in preparing for his notable tournament with Lord Wells, was obliged to send to London for a suit of armour fit for so important a trial. On a previous occasion also (in 1367), when a judicial combat was to be fought between Thomas Erskine and James Douglas of Egmont, the combatants had to apply to the English market for complete harness for themselves and horses and also sufficient offensive weapons. At this period, however, England itself was greatly inferior to Milan in forging these clothings of steel, so that the Earl of Hereford, afterwards Henry IV., was obliged to apply to the latter country for a suit of highly-tempered armour when he had appealed the Duke of Norfolk to deadly combat in the lists.

The coinage of the kingdom was still in silver, and consisted of pennies, half-groats, and groats. During this period, however, the change had commenced in the value of Scottish money as compared with that of England which was to go onward in such a wonderful degree as to make the separation between the two countries complete. In 1367 we find the first step made, when the scarcity of silver was so great that a pound of it had to be coined into 352 pennies. Here the deterioration did not stop; on the contrary it continued to be repeated, and to such an extent that Scottish money could no longer be received in England at its nominal value but for what it was intrinsically worth, and afterwards was not allowed to pass current at all until it had been recoined into English money. At length in 1390 the Scottish coinage had become so light as compared with its nominal rate that in the twelfth chapter of the Statutes of Westminster, during this year, it was enacted that a Scottish penny should pass in England only for a halfpenny, a half-groat for a penny, and a groat for twopence. This rapid downward pro-

gress during the short space of twenty-three years was not long in reaching its ultimatum, when Scottish pounds, shillings, and pence became the chief type of the national poverty.¹

As war was now so pre-eminently the great business of Scotland, its usages in this respect still continue to demand our chief notice. The knighthood of Scotland, still following the example of England, as England did that of the Continent, kept due pace in character, costume, and appointments with the chivalrous freemasonry of Europe, and was recognized wherever it went as belonging to the brotherhood. In this way the Scottish knight, whether within the barriers of the tournament or in the ranks of battle, might have passed for the warrior of any other country but for his heraldic cognizances, or the family war-cry which he shouted through the bars of his vizor. Since we last saw him at Bannockburn his covering, half-plate half yielding chain-work, had changed into an entire plate defence; while its other changes had followed the improvements which almost every year had added to the safety and grandeur of its wearer. In this way the steel-plated shoe which he put into the stirrup was composed of yielding plates called *sollerets*, that could fold into each other like the shells of a lobster, from which the device was probably taken; and his steel gloves, which were jointed still more delicately so as to yield to every flexure of the hand, were adorned at the knuckles with knobs, spikes, or choice embossments called gads or gadlings. The ponderous helmet still retained for the tournament was found too close and heavy for the toil of actual fight, and was therefore exchanged for the lighter bascinet, with its movable vizor. The breast and back were defended by two entire plates; and under them was worn a close garment of leather to protect the inner garments and skin from their friction. The triangular or pear-shaped shield was now rounded at the bottom, where the edge was also hollowed that it might rest upon the pommel of the saddle; and on the top was a niche on one side of the shield called a *bouche* (or mouth) in which the lance was laid as in a rest in the act of charging. Add to these his vanbraces or sleeves of plate for the arms, his cuisses for the legs, and his steel shoes, and not a point of him offers access to an enemy's weapon.² Thus men could move in such an array as would appear incredible did we not recollect that this facility was the effect of years of hard military training. The history of these chivalrous times presents many a contradictory picture of the agility of such

¹ Macpherson's *History of British Commerce*.

² Meyrick's *Ancient Armour*.

heavy-laden warriors, as well as of their tortoise-like unwieldiness and helplessness. Henry V., thus armed, could vault into his war-saddle without touching the stirrup; and this, we find, was a frequent feat with young chevaliers on first mounting their steeds after receiving the joy-inspiring accolade. On the other hand we find knights by the hundred lying helpless but unwounded on the field of battle in the place where they had been unhorsed, and obliged to lie patiently until some one arrived to despatch them or take them prisoner. The Scottish knights during this period seem in many cases to have dismounted before entering into battle, and to have used their horses only in pursuit or retreat. The same plan was adopted by Henry V. in his French wars, so that at the battle of Agincourt he and most of his nobles were on foot. On the other hand the French knights, who could not separate the idea of knighthood from the proud steed on which it curvetted, and who would neither fight nor die on a level with the *canaille*, preferred to serve on horseback even when prudence advised them to dismount. And dearly they often were made to pay, in the shape of ruinous defeats, for the elevation and distinction of their lofty war-saddles and the buoyant reckless excitement with which the prancings of their chargers inspired them. It was this difference of taste which made them so unwilling to co-operate with their prudent Scottish auxiliaries, and finally produced such quarrels as made Scottish aid unavailing.

In the wars of this chivalrous age the splendours of the tournament eclipsed, while its glories almost equalled the fame of victory upon a great national battle-field. Such was especially the case in England during the long and splendid reigns of Edward III. and that of his ill-fated successor, Richard II.; and when peace or truce gave a breathing interval the aspiring knights of every country crowded eagerly to the lists of Smithfield to run a career and shiver a lance with the now widely-renowned warriors of merry England. But neglected and unvisited Scotland, the while, could only look demurely on and be silent: she had no cities of rich pavilions of silk and gold to house the errant knights from every quarter of Christendom, or overflowing banquets to welcome them at the close of the day, although in stout skilful knights and perilous blows she possessed an abundance that might have satisfied the most adventurous champions that Europe could send forth. In Scotland, indeed, before the close of the reign of Alexander III., there were tilts and tournaments upon the modest scale of that early stage of chivalry, as we find in various notices of our old history; and both kings and

nobles were wont to appoint their passages of arms and invite brave guests to these chivalrous entertainments. But the war that followed was too full of the downright hatred and fierce realities of contest to afford room for its mere trials of show and courtesy; and men who were fighting every day and every hour for life itself were obliged to husband their blows for serious trial instead of wasting them on mere bravado. And yet, where could knights have been found more brave and fearless, more accomplished in every point of chivalry, and more renowned in deeds of personal prowess than Bruce, the good Lord James, Randolph, and others scarcely less distinguished? In this way the joust and tournament disappeared from Scotland at the outset, and no favourable season afterwards occurred for their recall. Even when the glow of chivalry was at its height the Scottish court was too poor for such an expensive display, and the country too bleak and sterile for the taste of foreign knights who, however brave, could not dispense with soft beds, good feasts, and warm sunshine. Thus the chivalry of Scotland was obliged to be subservient to that of other countries, especially of England, and to be a welcomed guest when it could not play the entertainer. But the Scottish lance at these distant trials was neither lightly felt nor cheaply prized, and the history of the age sufficiently attests that it was couched wherever the opportunity offered.

But already Scotland had heard for the first time the sound of a cannon, and this, too, so early as 1327, when Edward III. was making his first trial of arms against the Scots. He had brought with him one or more of these newly invented engines, although we do not hear of their use in this campaign, making it probable that they were brought along as warlike spells, to encourage the English and daunt their enemies rather than for the purpose of a serious cannonade. The first acquaintance of the Scots with these instruments, while they encamped on the Wear, is thus described by Barbour:—

“Twa noweltyis that day thai saw,
That forouth in Scotland had bene nane.
Tymmeris for helmys war the tane,
That thaim thought thane off gret bewté,
And alsua wondyr for to se.
The tothyr, CRAKYS WAR OFF WER,
That thai befor herd neuir er.
Off thir twa thingis thai had ferly.¹

These “cracks of war” were “crack of doom” to chivalry, which they shook and loosened, and at last dispersed, like a vapour or water-spout.

¹ Bruce, b. xix. l. 394. ‘Tymmeris,’ Fr. *timbre*, a crest of a helmet.

And yet they are mentioned by the poet in the same breath with helmet-crests as if both had been of equal importance! The next occasion in which cannon are mentioned in our Scottish wars was in 1339, when they were used, we are told, by the Scots in the siege of the castle of Stirling.¹ They had, however, been brought by their French auxiliaries, among whom they appear to have been lately introduced. After this date we read of cannon, under the name of bombards, employed at the battle of Crecy, at the siege of Calais, and on various other occasions in the wars between England and France. But an invention which was regarded with terror and distrust even by those who used it was of very slow growth, owing to the want of skill in the manufacture of gunpowder and fabrication of good artillery, by which the firing of a cannon was dangerous alike to friend and enemy. These perilous engines were therefore seldom employed except in sieges, when they could be permanently planted, and even then only as auxiliaries to the battering engines of ancient warfare, which were better understood and more easily handled. An invention by which the art of war, and even the history of the world, was changed, was not to be matured in a single day. From their poverty and want of skill the Scots were necessarily slow to adopt it, and therefore, with the exception of these two passing notices, we hear no more of their acquaintance with gunpowder until after the close of the present period.

After these accounts of the warlike knights and nobles of Scotland the weapons and military usages of the common people may be briefly dismissed. This can the more easily be done as the old rudeness and incompleteness still prevailed, notwithstanding the anxious enactments of Bruce for the better equipment of Scottish armies. The eye of Froissart, so much accustomed to the full grandeur of war as manifested in the well-appointed armies of France and England, was indignant at the barbarism of a Scottish array; so that while he does full credit to the valour of the Scots, he seldom omits the opportunity of a taunt at their costume, which was of all shapes and colours, and at their weapons, which he briefly sums up as hunting spears, knives, and bludgeons. But what was to be expected of a people who were obliged to import even their spear and arrow heads from Flanders? The same feeling of scorn may be supposed to have animated those French knights who returned dismounted and half-starved from Scotland; and in Froissart's detail of John de Vienne's report of the country to the French king there is the bitterness of personal rancour

as well as martinet contempt. After declaring that he would rather be count of Savoy or Artois than king of Scotland, de Vienne described its effective and regular force as consisting of five hundred lances, which, allowing the usual complement of six men to each lance, gave no more than three thousand soldiers fully armed: the rest were thirty thousand ill-clothed, worse armed, undisciplined commoners, whom he dismisses with the gruff assertion that they could not stand against the English archers or the charge of a thousand regular men-at-arms. In reading Scottish history it is easy to separate the truthful features in this harsh picture from what is downright exaggeration and caricature. As these armies were but a feudal militia, where each man was bound to serve only forty days, this circumstance made the Scottish leaders all the more eager for pitched battles before the period of service had expired, even though the chance might be against them. In preparing for battle the army was usually drawn up in four battalions of great depth; and from the number of spear-heads which could thus be advanced as far as the front line, a bristling impenetrable rampart was opposed to the charges of cavalry; but these heavy masses only presented a fairer mark to the volleys of the English archery when the latter were brought fully into action. Hence the difference in the fate of a Scottish army when it was assailed in close fight, or plied at a secure distance with missiles—and this, indeed, forms the chief secret of its success or defeat. In an inroad into England, where secrecy and speed were necessary, each man was mounted upon his hardy pony that moved upon the trot or gallop; his forty days' allowance of oatmeal and *girdle* for baking it were trussed behind his crupper; and in the rapid advance of the army the right wing was the van, the left the rear, and the centre kept its place in the middle. As the chief object of such inroads was to waste and plunder, time was seldom thrown away in sieges, or a battle provoked, except when either was inevitable. In this way the Scots were wont to boast that they could more than indemnify themselves for the worst that England could inflict upon their own country.² That such marches were often accompanied with the wildest excesses is evident from the war-laws established between the Earl of Carrick and John de Vienne for their mutual proceedings in the invasion of 1385. There was to be no pillage of their own countrymen in their advance; and in the enemy's territory no one was to set fire to a church, kill a woman or child, or commit rape. But even with all that

¹ Froissart, l. i. c. 74.² Froissart.

rancour which was now an established national feeling between the English and the Scots, there was also that love of fair play and practice of chivalrous courtesy and kindness which tended to soften the harsher features of war and prepare the way for friendly intercourse whenever a season of truce permitted.

In turning our inquiries to the home-life of the Scots during this period our range is still both obscure and limited in consequence of the warlike character of public events, beyond which nothing was thought worthy of being recorded. Such is the case in the pages even of Barbour and Wyntoun, where we might have expected the fullest information. Except when occupied in the stir of war or politics the noble dwelt in his castle, surrounded by all the feudal grandeur which his resources could maintain; and this was the more necessary from the feuds, rivalries, and contending interests so rife among the Scottish aristocracy, which obliged every member of the order to look well to the strength of his garrison and the number of his armed followers. Such a style of living, combined with the narrowness of his means and the imperfect cultivation of his domains, made a war with England a matter of necessity to a Scottish noble, as it gave him the chance of increasing his consequence and furnishing the means of subsistence for his throng of hungry dependants. But a still more important addition to his revenue depended upon his own personal prowess; and for every rich English antagonist whom he could unhorse and put to ransom he might calculate upon an amount equal to a three or four years' revenue. In this way, independently of its military grandeur, the victory of Otterburn was a most profitable speculation, as the ransom of the English captives yielded the enormous sum of two hundred thousand francs. Such, however, was the fashion over Europe at large; and therefore, while the iron-sheathed knighthood and nobility were wont in battle to ride down the foot-soldiers as if they were but part of the mire into which they were trodden, they were very careful to spare every one who wore a crest, and had wherewithal to pay for his freedom.

In the castles of the nobility of Scotland as elsewhere the course of education was exclusively a warlike one; and its demands upon the young page or squire, who was in training for knighthood, were sufficient to occupy the chief portion of his earlier years. To increase his strength by athletic trials, and his agility by nimble feats; to accustom himself to move in a suit of armour as if it were his natural clothing, by daily practice and gradual addition, until the whole costume was completed; to sit firmly and gracefully in the saddle;

to become perfect in the use of axe, lance, and sword, and the manifold tricks of fence either in giving or eluding a good blow or thrust—these important studies for the great business of his life occupied the same place which the acquirement of languages and sciences does in modern training. As for the active and outdoor amusements of persons of noble rank, these chiefly consisted of hunting and hawking, which had been practised in Scotland from the earliest periods. The country at large was also especially adapted for such sports, not merely from the abundance of its forests in which every kind of game was stored, and its extensive waste grounds that gave scope for the chase, but also from the excellence of its hounds and hawks, which were noted over Europe and exported as articles of foreign traffic. It was well indeed for Bruce and the companions of his wanderings that they were masters in the art of woodcraft, as they were obliged to depend upon its resources not only for their subsistence but in a great measure for their very clothing. As to the indoor sports of the Scottish nobles at this time, we find, as far as can be ascertained, that they resembled those of England. Their chief sedentary games were chess and tables (draughts), as we learn from incidental notices. For intellectual diversion there were harpers and minstrels either pertaining to the establishment or who wandered from castle to castle; and for those who were so accomplished as to be able to read, there were written romances of the *gests* of wonderful heroes whether national or foreign, whether real or fictitious. Then also for the purposes of joke and merriment there was the professional jester or fool, who formed a part of the royal and probably also the noble establishments of Scotland as he did in those of England. Even Bruce himself, little as he might be supposed to need such a functionary, had his *Patricius stultus*, who no doubt wore motley and brandished his bauble before the grave faces of Douglas, Randolph, and the rest, who laughed right heartily at his merry conceits. But knights and lords of the day could also on occasion play the "fool" for themselves; and an encounter of wit which is mentioned by Wyntoun gives us some idea of the breadth of their jokes and keenness of their sarcasm. On the day after the famous encounter between Sir David Lindsay and Lord Wells, an English knight remarked at the banquet that no doubt there were brave men in Scotland, but that this was to be accounted for from the fact that they were the sons of English fathers who had got into high favour with the Scottish dames during their conquest and occupation of Scot-

land. To this Sir Thomas Dalziel, a Scottish knight, replied, that such might be the case, but that the warriors of England had proportionally degenerated, as their mothers had betaken themselves to father confessors, cooks, clowns, and valets while their husbands were thus occupied in Scotland. This Dalziel, who appears to have been a mad wag and privileged joker, was the same person who confronted Courtenay's falcon with a magpie, and afterwards entrapped the proud Englishman into a ridiculous wager which he was fain to lose.¹

In such a dull kind of home life the subject of meals and banquets became one of primary importance. In Scotland, at this time, they chiefly consisted of dinner, which was taken in the morning, and supper, which was taken three or four hours after noon. From the outcry raised against James I. for attempting to introduce the higher modes of English living we may conclude that the Scottish style of diet, even to the close of this period, was sufficiently coarse and primitive. Of the scantiness of its materials also as compared with other countries we have sufficient assurance from Froissart. He tells us that the bread was of barley or oats; that the ale was marvellously thin and weak; and that the French knights could obtain no wine except at a very high price. Of the state of a nobleman's larder at this time, for the purposes of stately and formal banquets, we may venture to conjecture from the particulars mentioned in the chamberlain accounts as belonging to the royal household. Of flesh, there were huge quantities of beef, mutton, and pork; of fowl, the usual home poultry; of fish, salmon, herring, hard fish and white fish, sturgeons, lampreys, and eels, while porpoises are also mentioned. These, with articles of game, were enough for the substantialities of the banquet. But in addition to these ordinary and home productions there were luxuries of foreign importation, among which are specified white and red wine; spiceries, sweetmeats, and gingerbread; figs, raisins, and oil of olives; wax, vinegar, and verjuice. Here was abundance and variety enough to furnish a respectable bill of fare if the cookery could only have been commensurate with the materials; but there is reason to suspect, from the style of cookery prevalent in England, that it was both rude and over-artificial. Even the porpoise, at an early period among the English, was reckoned a dainty fit for a royal banquet, while their use of spices was so plentiful that the dishes were said to be "brennyng with wild-fire." There is good reason to conclude that

the epicure tastes of David II., trained in the first instance in France, and afterwards in London through a long period of captivity, must have had an important and perhaps an improving influence upon the banquets of the Scottish aristocracy.

The literary career of Scotland during the present period is of great importance from its fruitfulness in that kind of literary production which the country chiefly needed. It was the era of Scottish historians; and without their useful labours all that had preceded would have been an obscure and uncertain void, with nothing to fill it beyond mere tradition, or the incidental one-sided notices of the old English chroniclers. But from the commencement of this period we possess an array of Scottish annalists whose works, both in talent and truthfulness, will bear a fair comparison with the early historians of any other country. And first of these, both from priority of date and the importance of his historical labours, may be placed the name of John de Fordun.

This early writer was a native of Fordun in Kincardineshire, and is supposed to have been born about the middle of the fourteenth century. He does not appear, though educated for the church, to have prosecuted those useless branches of learning which were so much in vogue among the churchmen of the age, and this may have all the better qualified him for the important task to which he addressed himself. "Feeling his heart titillated and effervescent with patriotic zeal," says an old monkish writer, he resolved to write a history of his country. It was indeed no ordinary zeal that could have undertaken, and still more have achieved, such a difficult task; for the havoc of Edward I. among the ancient national records had consigned them to ruin, or scattered them to the winds. Instead, therefore, of sitting down in learned ease amidst a mass of historical documents that had been gathered to his hands, John of Fordun was obliged to go in quest of them; and this he did with a devotedness equal to that of the pilgrim in search of tombs and relics. "He travelled on foot," says the same old writer, "like an unwearied and investigating bee through the flowery meads of Britain, and into the oracular recesses of Ireland; taking his way through provinces and towns, through universities and colleges, through churches and monasteries, entering into conversation and not unfrequently sharing at bed and board with historians and chronologists; turning over books, debating and disputing with them, and pricking down or intitulating in his descriptive tablets all that most pleased him." How much time was employed in this laborious quest has

¹ Wyntoun; Fordun.

not been mentioned, but from incidental notices we learn that he was employed in reducing his materials to order and writing his great work during the reign of Richard II. of England—a period extending from A.D. 1387 to 1399, and that he was then a canon of the church of Aberdeen, in which town he resided, and a priest of the diocese of St. Andrews. His history of Scotland, entitled the *Scotichronicon*, which would have been deemed an excellent and valuable production under any circumstances, is a wonderful one considering the difficulties under which it was composed; instead of a romance or a disjointed narrative, it is a sober continuous detail of facts which every subsequent antiquarian discovery onward to the present day has only tended more strictly and completely to verify. Of the *Scotichronicon*, which is divided into books, the first two are occupied with the fabulous or mythic portion of the national history, a portion which, however worthless in itself, was in Fordun's time devoutly held to be true, and greatly more popular, as well as more highly valued by his readers, than the more veritable realities of an age nigher their own, where fancy could have no scope for invention or embellishment. The third, fourth, and fifth books, extending from the reign of Malcolm Canmore to the death of David I. (from A.D. 1056 to 1153), supply an important portion of our national history which no other source could have supplied. The venerable canon still continued his narrative after the last-mentioned period in the form of incidental notices, which probably he had intended to fill up; but finding his labours arrested by the infirmities of old age, he transferred the task of completing the *Scotichronicon*, along with the notes and documents he had collected for the purpose, to Walter Bower, Abbot of St. Colm, by whom the work was finished in sixteen books, which carry the narrative to the close of the reign of James I. It is to be regretted that the *Scotichronicon*, notwithstanding its superior merits which are now so generally recognized, should not have yet been completely translated into English.¹

It was not, however, merely in prose or in Latin, a language confined to the church, that Scottish history was written at this period. The country at this time produced a poet, and one of no inferior order, whose ambition it was to embody in fitting form the most important period of our national history. We allude to John Barbour, author of the well-known poem entitled *The Bruce*. As no record has been left

of his personal history we can only conjecture that Barbour was born either in Aberdeen or its neighbourhood, and in the earlier part of the fourteenth century. His studies, in which he had made remarkable proficiency, allowing for the age and his opportunities, were directed to the clerical profession, and in 1357 we find him occupying the important office of archdeacon of the cathedral of Aberdeen. So eager also was his desire of literary improvement that during the same year, notwithstanding the opportunities of his position for a life of ease and comfort, we find him travelling to Oxford for the purpose of studying at its famed university. This is evident from a safe-conduct granted to him by Edward III., at the request of David II., permitting him to repair with three students in his company to Oxford, there to reside and study, and afterwards to return to Scotland in safety. This also was not a single visit for the purpose, as in 1364 another similar royal permission was sought and granted "to Master John Barbour, Archdeacon of Aberdeen, with four knights, coming from Scotland by land or sea into England to study at Oxford or elsewhere, as he may think proper." By a third, dated 1368, he was allowed to enter into and travel through England and other dominions of the English king, with two valets and two horses, for the purpose of prosecuting his studies. But these repeated literary pilgrimages, and a fourth made at a later period, in which his safe-conduct allowed him to travel through England onward to St. Denis in France, accompanied by six knights, were soon to be turned to profitable account, even if they aided him to produce nothing else than *The Bruce*, which he wrote, as we learn from his own account, in 1375. And happily in every way was his subject chosen. It was addressed to that state of society in which warlike poetry is always certain to captivate. It detailed the deeds of a great national hero whose whole life was a splendid epic poem, and whose efforts were crowned with the success they merited. And while its events were sufficiently stirring and wonderful for an *iliad*, they were not the vague traditions of a remote antiquity or the inventions of fancy, but the veritable achievements of the generation that had just passed away, and which their children now living were able to verify. Accordingly while his work is eminently what he sought to make it—a "sooth-fast" history—it is also a heroic poem of such high merit as would have ensured it immortality had not the language in which it is written become antiquated and unintelligible after two centuries had passed away. Besides his *Bruce* John Barbour wrote a *Chronicle of Scottish His-*

¹ Mackenzie's *Scottish Writers*; Tytler's *Lives of Scottish Worthies*; Chambers' *Eminent and Illustrious Scotchmen*.

tory, a work which has unfortunately perished; but our regret on this account is the less that its disappearance has been so well supplied by his immediate successor, the Prior of Loch Leven. He was also, as recently discovered, the author of a number of poetical lives of saints.

This Scottish historian to whom we have just alluded was Andrew Wyntoun. He appears to have been born about the middle of the reign of David II., but his birthplace and family are unknown. Like his literary countrymen of the period he was a churchman and one of the canons regular of St. Andrews; and on or before the year 1395 he was elected prior of the monastery of St. Serf's Inch in Loch Leven, one of the most ancient religious establishments in Scotland. In this retirement and when now an old man he was requested by Sir John de Wemys, ancestor of the earls of Wemys, to write the *Orygynale Cronykil of Scotland*; and as the knight was one of his especial friends and benefactors the prior willingly complied, difficult and laborious though the task was from the scarcity of proper materials. It happened also that while he was thus engaged some unknown person similarly employed sent him a portion of Scottish history, extending from the birth of David II. to the death of Robert II., written in the same style and versification as Wyntoun's, with which the latter was so well satisfied that he incorporated it into his own work. In this way eighty-three years of the narrative, and these also the most important, were written by two historians who lived during the greater part of the period. Although he wrote in rhyme Wyntoun was so careful of historical truth that, having received more accurate information upon certain points after the first copy of the work was finished, he wrote a second in which these corrections and improvements were introduced. The *Chronicle* was finished between the years 1420 and 1424; and that it must have been shortly after the death of Robert, Duke of Albany, is evident from his fervent prayer for the prosperity of the duke's children, who were still flourishing in prosperity. Wyntoun and Fordun, though contemporaries and employed in the same kind of occupations, appear to have been unknown to each other; and it is interesting, on this account, to mark the coincidence and agreement of the two historians upon the most important parts of our national history.¹

Wyntoun's *Chronicle* is written in verse of eight syllables, although he frequently varied this order by lines sometimes of only six and

sometimes of ten syllables; and although as a poet he is not to be compared to Barbour, yet his narrative is easy and flowing, while he sometimes rises to true poetic fervour and graphic power of description, especially in his delineation of battles and the achievements of individual heroes. Like the other historians both of his own and an earlier period Wyntoun commences his *Chronicle of Scotland* with a history of the creation of the world and the events of ancient kingdoms through the first five books, and does not reach his proper subject till the sixth, when he fairly breaks ground, A.D. 724, with the wars of the Scots and Picts. As he goes onward in his task even his minuteness and diffuseness become valuable from their evident aim at full and complete historical accuracy and the valuable historical information they introduce, which could nowhere else be found, and which he comprises in the last four books. His narrative is also the more worthy of credit on account of the impartial spirit which he exhibits throughout; for instead of vilifying and abusing the enemy, he is careful to acknowledge the worth and valour of the English as well as of his own countrymen. It is unfortunate, in his case as well as in that of Barbour, that the obsolete style in which it is written has reduced his valuable *Chronicle* to a work which is now consulted only by the historian and the antiquary.

In our notices hitherto of the learned men of Scotland we have seen the obstacles with which they had to contend. In the national struggle for existence scholarship was little in request, and those who sought it with a disinterested ardour which the limited means of native schools and monasteries could not supply were obliged to seek it abroad, not only at the wonted price of expense and toil, but also at the risk of travel and adventure. They went forth in the spirit of knights-errant in quest of knowledge, and their choice was limited to hostile England, which they were allowed to enter upon sufferance, or to France, where they were regarded as aliens and barbarians. And even when the prize of learning and literary distinction had been won they felt that they had paid their beloved nationality as the price, for they had no temptations to return to a country where their acquirements would either have been despised as mere pedantry or dreaded as downright sorcery. It was doubtless on this account that so few of these erudite Scots returned, and that the greater part were lost to their country by being obliged to select their final homes among those learned foreign communities in which their endowments had naturalized them. But the time had now arrived, although so late in its coming,

¹ Preface to Macpherson's edition of Wyntoun's *Chronicle*; incidental notices in the *Chronicle*; Mackenzie's *Scots Writers*.

when Scottish scholars were no longer to be the martyrs of voluntary exile or the victims of precarious safe-conducts and marauding spear-men. Scotland was now to have a university of her own, in which the pursuit of learning was to be combined with the blessings of country, and home, and peaceful retirement; and the merit of this heroic but unobtrusive achievement, which could only be fully understood and valued long after its agent had passed away, belongs to Henry Wardlaw, Bishop of St. Andrews.

This eminent churchman, who had studied, as has been supposed, at the University of Paris, was appointed precentor of the cathedral of Glasgow, of which see his uncle, Walter Wardlaw, created a cardinal by Urban VI., was bishop. While precentor, Henry Wardlaw was sent on a mission to the papal court at Avignon; and during his residence there a vacancy occurred in the bishopric of St. Andrews, upon which he was preferred to the see A.D. 1404 by Benedict XIII. Returning to Scotland with the additional office of papal legate the new Bishop of St. Andrews addressed himself to the difficult task of reforming the dissolute lives of the churchmen and removing the prevalent ignorance of the people at large; and for this twofold object he erected a college at St. Andrews, to which the pope granted a confirmation on the following year. We have already noticed in another chapter the triumph with

which this charter was received, and the jubilee of religious rites and popular festivity with which the new institution was inaugurated. Like the other world-famed universities, its origin was sufficiently humble in appearance, the first building, called the Pedagogy, in which the lectures were delivered, being nothing more than a large wooden building; but in process of time, through successive endowments, this edifice of timber became St. Mary's, St. Salvador's, and St. Leonard's Colleges, and finally the United College or University of St. Andrews. The plan of laws and education which the bishop drew up for his university was the same as that of Paris, which afterwards formed the model of the other Scottish universities; and fortunately for an infant institution in such a country and at such a period, the bishop had learned coadjutors, who gave their services without fee or salary. These were John Shevez, William Stephen, and John Lister, lecturers on divinity; Laurence of Lindores and Richard Cornwall, the first a lecturer on canon, and the last on civil law; and John Gow, William Foulis, and William Croisier, professors of philosophy—men who taught without remuneration, although, according to some writers, their pupils were numbered in thousands. The result of their labours belongs to a future portion of our history.¹

¹ Spotswood; Buchanan; Keith's *Scottish Bishops*; *History of St. Andrews*.

PERIOD VI.

FROM THE ACCESSION OF JAMES I. TO THE DEATH OF JAMES III. (A.D. 1424 TO A.D. 1488).

CHAPTER I.

REIGN OF JAMES I. (1424-1433).

Accession of James I.—His purpose of effecting a national reform—His coronation—Enactments of his first parliament for the suppression of idleness and beggary, the improvement of the royal revenues, the promotion of commerce, and the practice of archery—First proceedings of James to suppress the tyranny of the nobles—Arrest and trial of Duke Murdoch, his family, and their adherents—Their trial and execution—Parliamentary statutes for the maintenance of peace and promotion of the public welfare—Statutes for the suppression of heresy—Proposal of marriage between the French dauphin and the infant daughter of James—James consents to the alliance—Commercial treaty between Scotland and Flanders—Parliamentary enactments for the national defence—Statutes imposing restrictions on commerce—Enactments for the right administration of the laws—Decrees respecting inns and innkeepers—Their purpose—Method adopted to make the laws generally known—Alliance of James with Eric, King of Denmark—Attempts of James to reduce the Highlands and Isles to his government—He holds a parliament at Inverness—Apprehension and execution of Highland chiefs—Rebellion of Alexander, Lord of the Isles—His humble submission at Holyrood—Insurrection of Donald Balloch—His destructive invasion of Lochaber—His retreat and flight to Ireland—Desperate Highland feud in Caithness—Expedition of James to the Highlands—Submission of the island chiefs—Act of retributive justice inflicted on a Highland chieftain—Instance of James's strictness in maintaining order among his courtiers—Obstacles to his plans for the national improvement—A pestilence visits Scotland—Condition of England at this period—Tempting offers of the English for a permanent peace with Scotland—Debate in parliament on the subject—The offers rejected—Paul Crawar the Hussite arrives in Scotland—His trial and martyrdom.

ON the entry of James I. into Scotland, a free man and a king, after his long and unjust captivity in England, the aspect of affairs in his native country must have considerably damped the ardour of his triumph. Half a century of delegated rule among a people who had previously been thrown back into barbarism by war and invasion, and the unjust administration of Albany, who had favoured the usurpations of the powerful for the purpose of confirming his own, had produced their inevitable effects. The nobles, who would tolerate no despotism but their own, were certain to traverse the royal authority as soon as it opposed their own interests; while the people who had fought so bravely for national independence cared little for individual liberty, and contentedly submitted to the rule of their feudal superiors irrespective of king or parliament. Where no private rights were respected, no property could be safe; and James must have been struck with the view of that insecurity both of life and property which everywhere prevailed. It is said that on this occasion he exclaimed, "Let God but grant me life, and there shall not be a spot

in my kingdom where the key shall not keep the castle, and the furze-bush the cow, though I myself should lead the life of a dog to accomplish it!"¹

On entering Scotland James proceeded to Edinburgh, where he kept the festival of Easter, and afterwards repaired to Scone for his coronation. There he and his queen were crowned by Henry Wardlaw, Bishop of St. Andrews, Murdoch, Duke of Albany, as Earl of Fife, placing him in the royal chair. The new sovereign on this occasion signalized his accession in the wonted form by bestowing knighthood upon several of the nobility, among whom was Alexander Stewart, youngest son of Duke Murdoch. The assembling of a parliament was the next necessary step; and on the 26th of May, five days after the coronation, the three estates were assembled at Perth to legislate for the affairs of the kingdom under its change of administration. As it is from this period that the regular history of the Scottish parliament commences in consequence of the destruction of its previous re-

¹ *Scotichron.* i. xvi. c. 34.

cords, its proceedings are worthy of particular notice, more especially as they illustrate the condition of the country, the evils under which it chiefly laboured, and the means adopted for their removal. The following are some of the principal enactments of this parliament:—

The privileges of the church were to be maintained inviolate. A firm and secure peace was to be kept throughout the realm among the king's lieges, so that no man was to take on hand to make war upon others in all time to come. Rebellion against the king's person was to be visited with the forfeiture of life and goods. No man of whatever estate, degree, or condition was to ride or travel through the country with more persons than were suitable to his rank, and for whom he should make full and ready payment. And should any complaint be made of such "riders or gangers," the officers of the district where they happen to be are ordered to arrest them until the king's pleasure shall be known respecting them. Officers and ministers of the law were to be appointed through all the realm, who had sufficiently of their own, through which they might be punished if they trespassed in their duty, and who could maintain the law in behalf of the king's commons. But besides these idle travellers, the "riders and gangers" aforesaid, there were "sorners and thiggers"—men of a more dangerous description, as their whole life was one of wandering, while they lived everywhere at free quarters; and against them, therefore, the statutes of this parliament were especially levelled. No companies of this kind were to quarter themselves upon churchmen or husbandmen; and on any complaint being brought against them they were to be arrested as breakers of the king's peace and punished on conviction; also, if they sustained any injury in their arrest such injury was to be imputed to themselves. That every plea for such enforcements of hospitality should be removed, it was also decreed by another statute, that in all borough towns of the realm, and on highways of wonted thoroughfare, hostelries and houses of reset should be established, having stables and chambers; and that bread, ale, and all other food, as well for horse as man, should be provided there at the reasonable market price.

The dilapidation of the royal revenues and the necessity of raising money for the payment of the king's ransom had made the subject of finance a matter of utmost importance; and therefore, as might be expected, the enactments in this department were both full and stringent. All the great and small customs and borough-mails of the realm were to pertain to the king during life, and none was to lay claim to any

portion of them until his right had been examined and approved by the king and council. All the land and rents that had belonged to the king's predecessors were to be taken into account, and the claims and titles of their present holders examined, so that the king might perceive by what right they held them. For the payment of the royal ransom a donative of twelve pence in every pound, was to be raised, or more if it was found needful, upon the lands, rents, customs, and goods both of regalities and royalties throughout the kingdom, including both corn and cattle; and from this demand only draught oxen, riding horses, and household utensils were to be exempted. Then followed a minute specification of the rate at which the different kinds of grain and cattle were to be assessed, and the manner in which inquisitions were to be made upon the value of lands and goods. All this amount of taxation was to be paid in gold and silver to the collectors within fifteen days; and in the event of failure or shortcoming in payment, a cow was to be taken for five shillings, a ewe or wether for twelve pennies, a goat, gimmer, or dinmont for eightpence, a wild mare and her foal for ten shillings, &c. In like manner, with regard to grain, a boll of wheat was to pay, in case of failure, a forfeit of twelve pennies; a boll of rye, bear, or pease, eight pennies, and a boll of oats, three pennies. On these goods being delivered to the lord of the land he was to make good the deficiency; but if he was not forthcoming they were to be sold on the next market-day, or sent to the king.

After these important statutes others of minor importance followed, among which may be enumerated the prohibitions against killing salmon out of the legal season; the destruction of the fry of fishes by unlawful modes of fishing in fresh waters where the sea fills and ebbs; and carrying gold and silver out of the kingdom without paying the usual tax to the king. Similar restrictions, in the narrow spirit of the age, were imposed upon export and import articles of traffic. In the same economical and over-cautious spirit enactments were levelled against the harbouring of rooks, from the destruction they occasioned to the corn, on which account they were to be dislodged from the trees of kirkyards and orchards without mercy; but if this expulsion could not be effected the proprietors of the trees were at least to destroy the young before they had taken wing, under penalty of forfeiting the trees themselves to the crown. Another strict but wiser prohibition was directed against the favourite game of football, at which no one was to play under a penalty of four pennies. James had perfected himself in

the practice of archery in England, and was aware of its immense importance as an arm of warfare, on which account he was anxious to naturalize it among his subjects. After, therefore, prohibiting these football musters a statute on archery follows in these words:—"Item, It is ordained that all men busk them to be archers from they be twelve years of age. And that in ilk ten pounds worth of land there be made bow-marks, and specially near parish kirks, where upon holy days men may come and at the least shoot thrice about and have usage of archery. And whoso uses not the said archery, the lord of the land shall raise of him a wedd [forfeit]; and if the lord raise not the said pain [penalty] the king's sheriff or his masters shall raise it to the king."¹

Among these enactments nothing could be more formidable to the Scottish aristocracy than the demand that was now to be made upon them for their right to the holding of those crown lands which they had either violently usurped or fraudulently obtained during the long and corrupt administration of Albany, and the threat of resumption with which the demand was accompanied where full and legal right could not be established. That such a law could be passed, by which so many nobles would have been impoverished, implies that they regarded it either as a mere formality or a bravado which the new king would not dare to execute. Another supposition is that the parties most interested were not present on the occasion, and that the resolution was decided, not in a full meeting, but by a select junto or committee of the king's supporters who were aware of his wishes and had not shared in the spoil. Equally daring, perhaps, was the large subsidy which was to be levied upon all classes, through which the irritated commons might be tempted to make common cause with their feudal superiors against this new and severe system of legislative rule. The position of James was indeed that of a reformer whose reward could be nothing short of martyrdom, more especially when his demands were made not upon mere vague opinions but substantial purses, which their owners would hold fast by the same unscrupulous practices that had filled them. But the hazard he was ready to dare, and he was only biding his time. Even at his entrance into Scotland and on the 13th of May, eight days before his coronation, he had arrested Walter Stewart, Earl of Fife, eldest son of Duke Murdoch; Malcolm Fleming, Lord of Cumbernauld; and Thomas Boyd of Kilmarnock. Although the latter two were afterwards liberated

such a proceeding showed how little he was likely to be moved from his purposes by the rank or power of the offenders. In the same year, and probably not long after, he followed these bold proceedings by causing the arrest and imprisonment of Duncan, Earl of Lennox, and of Robert Graham, by whom he was finally assassinated.²

At length, having matured his plans, James summoned a parliament which met at Perth on the 12th of March, 1425. He had won over the clergy and a portion of the lesser barons to his side; and feeble though such support was compared with the power of the opposite party, he advanced fearlessly but silently to their overthrow. In the meantime the doomed race of Albany reposed in their security, and the nobles who adhered to them suspected no danger; and in this light confident spirit they left their strong castles and repaired to Perth to take part in the national deliberations. The proceedings of parliament for the first eight days threw them still more completely off their guard, for they had reference to the doctrines of the Lollards, which had now found an entrance into Scotland; the suppression of confederacies for the disturbance of the public peace; and the punishment of leasing-makers who propagated false reports against the king and his government. But on the ninth day the storm burst out by the sudden arrest of Murdoch, Duke of Albany, and Alexander Stewart, his youngest son, whom the king had knighted at his coronation. And these were not all; for with them were arrested Archibald, Earl of Douglas; William Douglas, Earl of Angus; George Dunbar, Earl of March; and twenty-three others, comprising the most renowned names and influential men of the kingdom. As for Walter Stewart, the eldest son of Duke Murdoch; the Earl of Lennox, his father-in-law; and Sir Robert Graham, whose subtlety and daring were more to be feared than the whole house of Albany put together, they had been secured some time previous and were now in close ward. James followed this rapid blow by occupying Murdoch's castles of Falkland in Fife and Doune in Menteith, while the duke himself was sent to Caerlaverock Castle and his duchess, Isabella, to that of Tantallon, where they could be closely watched, and where their feudal power would be unavailing for their rescue.³ Having secured with equal promptitude the castles and strongholds of the principal captives, the king was now able to proceed to their trial, which promised to be equally decisive and sharp. The love of justice and desire

¹ *Acts of the Parliaments of Scotland*, vol. ii. pp. 3-6.

² *Scotichron.* l. xvi. c. 9.

³ *Ibid.* xvi. 10.

of personal revenge which had hitherto animated his proceedings must have been strengthened by a sense of his own danger should these men be assoilzied and allowed to go at large. He had brought his enemies to a point at which either they or himself must perish.

On the 24th of May, 1425, this remarkable trial, compared with which the proceedings of the famous Black Parliament were of inferior account, was held in the royal town of Stirling. Unfortunately no formal record of it exists to explain the anomalies with which the incidental notices of its proceedings are characterized. The parliament was assembled to sit in judgment, and over them the king presided as supreme judge adorned with the insignia of royalty. The jury consisted of twenty-one nobles and barons, and among them we are startled to find seven names of those who had been arrested with Murdoch at Stirling. They were the Earls of March, Douglas, and Angus, Gilbert Hay of Errol, Constable of Scotland, Sir John Montgomery, Sir Robert Cunningham of Kilmaurs, and Sir Herbert Herries of Terregles. It would be in vain to inquire by what process these accused persons had so soon been converted into judges, as they were men upon whom craven fear or a heroic love of justice was not likely to have wrought such a suspicious transformation. The charge against the duke's eldest son is more intelligible, for it was that of robbery—a crime not wholly unknown to men of the highest rank during these early periods of misrule, although it went under a gentler name until the law could arrest the offender. After a trial, which was held on the first day, he was found guilty, condemned to die, and immediately executed; but whatever were his faults, his noble presence and attractive manners had won for him the general favour, so that his fate was deeply deplored by the whole nation. On the following day Duke Murdoch, his second son Alexander, and the Earl of Lennox were brought to trial; but of what crime they were accused no notice has been handed down to us; we may conjecture, however, that their usurpation of the royal authority while the heir of the throne was alive, and their seizure of the crown lands and property constituted the offence of treason in the eyes of their judges, and formed the chief articles of the indictment. The whole three were condemned and executed the day after on an eminence before the castle of Stirling called the Heading Hill; and the thrill of astonishment with which the spectators beheld the death of such princely personages under the executioner's axe was coupled with reverence and pity when they contemplated the white hairs of Lennox, who

was now eighty years old,¹ and the towering forms of the duke and his son, who were pre-eminent in that personal grandeur which seems to have distinguished the whole race of Albany. Of the unhappy family of Murdoch one had escaped the general destruction; this was James, his youngest son, who on the arrest of the duke at Perth had contrived to escape into the Highlands. Here he met a congenial spirit in Finlay, Bishop of Lismore and Argyle, who had been his father's chaplain, and by whom he was received and sheltered. Impatient for revenge, the pair collected a band of Highland freebooters and came down upon Dumbarton, where they slew Sir John Stewart of Dundonald, the king's uncle, and thirty-two of his followers, and after plundering the town committed it to the flames. For this the young man was outlawed by the king and so keenly pursued by the ministers of justice that he and his reverend preceptor were obliged to fly to Ireland, from which they never returned. Five of his band, however, were apprehended, and their execution, which followed close upon that of Murdoch, was a terrible close of the tragedy, as well as a warning to the lawless of the new rule of justice and retribution which the king had introduced into Scotland; for after being torn to pieces by wild horses their bleeding limbs were suspended upon gibbets. His principal enemies having thus been mercilessly swept away, James released those who had been apprehended along with them; and notwithstanding his poverty remitted the forfeiture of the estates of Albany and Lennox, which the crown might have justly demanded.²

After these severe sentences had been executed, the parliament proceeded to enact statutes for the maintenance of peace and promotion of public welfare, in all of which the presiding mind of James is conspicuous, and the care with which he had studied the system of English legislation. They chiefly concerned the regulation of the military musters or "weaponslaws" for the protection of the kingdom; the cultivation of the soil, and improvement of husbandry; the preservation of woods, forests, and orchards; and the promotion of the national commerce. In the last particular James could scarcely be expected to be in advance of England itself; and his laws, by which trade was restricted and crippled instead of being advanced, were enacted in that exclusive spirit which predominated over the foreign trade of the port of London. Another important subject which the condition of the

¹ *Scotichron.* xvi. c. 10.

² *Scotichron.* xvi. 10; Macvey Napier's *Life of Napier of Merchiston*.

kingdom urgently demanded was the right administration of justice, and on this head the parliamentary enactments were characterized by wisdom and humanity. The law was to be equally open, and satisfaction impartially administered both to rich and poor; and for those whose scanty means were insufficient to hire a pleader, and who lacked skill to maintain their own cause, an advocate was to be provided by the presiding judge at the public expense. In the statutes that were made for the protection of the national religion and the punishment of heretics, the same wisdom and even-handed justice was scarcely to be expected; the Lollards were continuing to multiply, and as yet no better method had been discovered for the suppression of heresy than the extinction of those who held it. The clergy also were urgent for the measure; and James, who depended upon them in his warfare against the powerful aristocracy, was obliged to yield to their demands, and leave the unfortunate Lollards to their fate. In sacrificing an obscure handful of impracticable religionists to the interests of so needful and influential a body as the clergy, he no doubt thought that he was acting according to the soundest political wisdom. But when does political wisdom read aright the signs of the times when the progress of religious truth is in question? In little more than a century after that Lollardism was to be the chief power in the state, and in its irresistible progress his race were to be dethroned and swept away.

James was now a father, and his infant daughter, baptized by the name of Margaret, became even in her cradle a subject of competition between the two mighty realms of France and England. Although Henry V. was dead, yet the able administration of his brother, the Duke of Bedford, was still sufficient to maintain the lustre of the English arms in France, and reduce Charles VII., its sovereign, to the greatest straits. In this difficulty it was natural for the latter to bethink him of the effective aid he had received from the Scottish auxiliaries, and be desirous of a still closer alliance with such useful allies by a matrimonial union between the royal houses of France and Scotland. Accordingly in 1425 Stewart of Darnley, Lord of Aubigny and Constable of the Scottish forces in France that had survived the defeat of Verneuil, and the Archbishop of Rheims, were sent as ambassadors to Scotland to propose the renewal of the ancient league between the two kingdoms, and the marriage of Louis of Anjou, son and heir of King Charles, to the Scottish princess Margaret. Although James had been so long a resident in

England, and had so greatly profited by his English education, he could not forget his unjust detention, or the exorbitant ransom upon which he had obtained his freedom, and he gladly listened to the proposal conveyed as it was by the first prelate of France. He therefore returned an assent to the French court through Henry Leighton, Bishop of Aberdeen, Sir Patrick Ogilvy, justiciar of Scotland, and Edward Lauder, Archdeacon of Lothian. It was agreed that in five years the prince and princess should be betrothed, after which the latter was to be conveyed to France. Another important embassy during this year was one of a commercial nature from the states of Flanders. The friendly traffic which subsisted betwixt that country and Scotland had been changed into hostility during the regencies of the two Dukes of Albany; and the Flemings had not only behaved with great arrogance towards the Scottish merchants, but issued letters of marque against their ships. This change could be easily accounted for by the close alliance which had been formed between their sovereign, the Duke of Burgundy, and the English against France and all its allies and supporters. In consequence of this alienation James, at his arrival in Scotland, had ordered the Scottish trade to be transferred from Flanders to Middleburg in Zealand. Such a transference was little suited to the interest of the Flemings, who, on account of the deficiency of manufactures in Scotland, had carried on a profitable traffic in its markets, and hence their eagerness on the present occasion to repair their inadvertence. James, who was holding his birthday at St. Andrews, received the ambassadors with kindness, and renewed the amity which was so necessary for his own rude and unskilful subjects; and he obtained more ample privileges than before in behalf of the Scottish merchants as the price of the restoration of the staple to Flanders.

At a third parliament, which was held at Perth on the 11th of March, 1426, several important acts were passed illustrative of the necessities of the times and the character of James as a legislator, and which therefore are worthy of our attention. For the defence of the realm by the promotion of military discipline among the subjects four weaponslaws were to be held annually within each sheriffdom, to which every man liable to military service was to repair, armed according to his means and holding. Thus each gentleman having ten pounds' worth of land or more was to be equipped with basnet, leg-harness, sword, spear, and dagger. Gentlemen having less extent of land were to be armed according to

their means at the judgment of the sheriff; and the same to be the case with "honest yeomen" that had the means of furnishing themselves as men-at-arms. As for the other yeomen of the realm, all between the ages of sixteen and sixty were to be sufficiently provided with bows and arrows, sword, buckler, and knife. These regulations of weaponshaws for the rural districts were also applicable to the burghs under the superintendence of the aldermen and bailies, with penalties upon each defaulter according to his rank and the frequency of his non-attendance. In respect to the commerce of the kingdom, it was enacted that every merchant trafficking beyond sea should bring home with him a certain amount of harness and armour, spear-shafts and bow-staves, according to the value of his mercantile cargo. In the course of traffic or travel the passage betwixt Scotland and Ireland was debarred, and the king's officers of the frontiers of Scotland lying opposite to Ireland were to enforce this restriction, so that neither ship, galley, nor man should cross without special permission. The reasons stated for this singular prohibition were that the king's rebels were harboured in Ireland by the Irish, and that the King of England's subjects in that quarter might be dangerous spies upon the Scottish government. And this and other prohibitions of the same kind respecting Ireland were made, it was stated, not from hatred of their good old friends the Irish, but merely to eschew the perils aforesaid. The short-sighted policy for preventing the transportation of money out of the realm was still as unrelenting as ever; and it was decreed that no man should carry gold or silver out of Scotland under penalty of forty pence for each pound. Foreign merchants receiving money in Scotland were to expend the whole upon the produce of the country, and this on the attestation of the host of the inn at which they lodged.

With regard to the internal rule of the country, it was ordained that all subjects were to live and be governed only under the king's laws and the statutes of the realm, and under no particular laws nor special privileges, nor by any laws of other countries or realms. It was also intimated that the king, with consent of his parliament, had ordained that his chancellor, with certain members of the three estates whom he should choose, were thenceforth to sit three times a year where the king thinks fit to command them, when they shall "know, examine, conclude, and finally determine all and sundry complaints, causes, and quarrels that may be determined before the king's council;" and that these judges should have their expenses de-

frayed by the parties against whom judgment is given from fines, or otherwise at the king's pleasure. No man was to be admitted to the office of attorney in the justice-ayre unless he was of honest character and sufficient abilities, to be certified by the judge and barons there present. Six "wise and discreet men," who were best acquainted with the laws, were ordered by this parliament to be chosen from each of the three estates to examine the books of the law, that is to say, the *Regiam Majestatem* and *Quoniam Attachamenta*, who were to "mend the laws that needed amendment;" and it was ordained also, "that all lawful exceptions of law be admitted in judgment, that all frivolous and fraudulent exceptions be repelled, and not admitted by the judges," so that litigated cases and pleas should not "be wrongously prolonged in skaith and prejudice of the party and in fraud of the law."

Having thus provided for the simplification of the statute-book and due administration of the laws in general, the parliament directs its enactments against those particular classes by whom they were most likely to be set at nought. And here a decree startling to every modern notion of liberty, but necessary for that lawless state of society, first strikes the eye. It is announced that the hostellers [innkeepers] in burgh towns and public highways had complained of those who travelled through the country, that instead of harbouring at the inns on their journey, they were wont to reside with their acquaintances and friends. To repress this crying evil the king, with counsel and consent of the three estates, forbids any who are travelling on horseback or on foot through the country to reside in any other houses than the inns aforesaid. "But if it be persons," the prohibition adds, "that lead many with them in company, they shall have freedom to harbour with their friends, so that their horses and their attendants be harboured and lodged in the common hostelries." This apparently extravagant law struck at the root of that oppressive practice of the nobility by which they quartered themselves at pleasure upon those who were unable to resist them. It was also a check upon powerful plotters and conspirators, who could thus be separated from their armed trains and exposed to the clutch of justice. It was further enacted that no inhabitants of burghs or dwellers near public highways should receive or admit any such travellers or strangers under a penalty of forty shillings. Another decree equally stringent had for its object the suppression of idleness. Each sheriff of the realm within his own district was to "inquire diligently if any idle men that have nought of their own to live upon" were

dwelling in his sheriffdom; and if such were found they were to be arrested and kept in security until their means of livelihood were ascertained. Forty days were to be assigned to them for getting masters or betaking themselves to some lawful craft; but if after this time they still continued idle they were to be sent to prison and punished according to the royal pleasure.

Such were the principal enactments of this third parliament. There were others that had reference to the regulation of the weights and measures used in buying and selling, and the establishment of an equal standard throughout the kingdom. As it was necessary that the new regulations of this and the two preceding parliaments should be widely diffused and generally known, it was finally ordained that all their statutes and ordinances should be inscribed in the king's register, that copies should be delivered to the different sheriffs, and that these should be published and proclaimed at all the public places of every sheriffdom; and that copies of them should be delivered to all prelates, barons, and burghs of their bailiwick upon the expenses of writing being paid by the applicants. Each sheriff was also to cause the tenor of this act to be kept, under penalty of losing his office; and to give open warning to the people of his bailiwick both to land and burgh, of all the statutes and ordinances made in these three parliaments, so that none might be able to pretend ignorance.¹

While James was thus legislating for the internal peace of the country his friendly relations with foreign powers, upon which the success of his measures so much depended, were firmly established. With England he was allied by his queen, and with France through the affiancement of his infant daughter with the dauphin; he had healed the dissensions between his own country and Flanders, and secured the favour of the pontiff by his zeal for the welfare of the church. These peaceful prospects were now completed by an embassy which he sent to Eric, King of Denmark, Norway, and Sweden, for the purpose of renewing the old alliances between Scotland and the northern court, which had commenced with Alexander III. The envoys of James on this occasion were Lord William Crichton, his chamberlain, and William Fowles, keeper of his privy-seal. A treaty of mutual benefit was established, the most important article of which was an agreement on the part of James to continue the annual payment of an hundred marks for the sovereignty of Man and the Western Islands, which Alexander III. had purchased in 1266.²

¹ *Acts of the Parliament of Scotland*, p. 9-11.

² *Scotichron.* l. xvi. c. 33.

Having thus confirmed his right of dominion over the whole of the adjacent dependencies of Scotland, as well as over the kingdom itself, James now proceeded to introduce obedience and order into the Highlands and Isles, where the authority of the Scottish crown had hitherto been little, if at all, recognized. As a fitting preliminary every lord beyond the Grampian mountains in whose district an ancient castle had stood was required by act of parliament to rebuild it and reside in it, or at least give it to the keeping of one of his friends, in order that the territory might be properly ruled and its produce expended for its benefit. He took the initiative in the movement by commanding the castle of Inverness to be repaired for his residence; and having summoned a parliament to meet him there he repaired to this remote settlement accompanied by his chief nobles and barons, and with such a force as might set rebellion at defiance. The northern satraps of these wild districts, whether of Norman or Celtic lineage, who had hitherto ruled their vassals with the unlimited sway of Asiatic potentates and acknowledged no superior, must have trembled at this unwelcome coming of a master whose will was law, and who had full power to enforce it. On arriving at Inverness in the spring of 1427 James convoked his parliament, to which the Highland chiefs were especially summoned; and, instead of flying to their fastnesses, they complied and came down to the meeting apparently without fear of danger. But no sooner did they enter that fatal stronghold in which the parliament was assembled than one by one they were laid hold of, ironed, and thrown into the dungeons beneath, while James, applauding himself for the dexterity of their capture, vented his satisfaction in an extemporaneous Latin rhyme.³ Of these prisoners to the number of forty who were thus entrapped the names of the principal chiefs have been given, with a formidable notice of their power and importance. There was Alexander of the Isles; Angus Dow or Duff, with his four sons, a leader whose following was four thousand men of Strathnaver; Kenneth More, who could muster two thousand; and John Ross, William Leslie, Angus of Moray, and Mackmaken, chiefs each of whom was a leader of two thousand armed vassals. But secure of immunity they had entered that hostile town with only their personal attendants, and each had crossed that royal threshold only to find himself a prisoner. Even womanhood was not exempted from this comprehensive sweep of justice, for the Countess

³ Thus given by Bower:—

“Ad turrin fortem ducamus cauté cohortem:

Per Christi sortem, meruerunt hi quia mortem.”

of Ross, mother of Alexander of the Isles, was made to share the hard fate of her son. Of the prisoners Alexander Makreury of Garmoran, and John MacArthur, each the head of a thousand followers, were speedily tried and executed, as was also James Campbell, who was accused and convicted of the murder of John, Lord of the Isles. The other prisoners, against whom no charge had been proved, were dispersed and warded in the castles of the different lords, where some died, and the rest were finally liberated. Thus, by a form of justice apparently as wild and lawless as the trespasses it chastised, the Highlands and its chiefs were reduced to temporary obedience.¹

There was one offended potentate, however, among those who obtained their liberty who felt the indignity of the insult more than the clemency that followed it, and who had power to make his anger felt. This was Alexander, Lord of the Isles, whom James had restored to his sea-girt dominions after sharp admonitions to abandon his profligate courses and be more loyal in time to come. The island lord only waited till James had returned to the Lowlands, when he collected ten thousand men of Ross and the Isles and came down upon Inverness, the town of his humiliation, which he burned to the ground. James, alarmed at this outbreak, promptly collected a force, and by a rapid march reached Lochaber, where Alexander was encamped. Daunted by this unexpected arrival and the display of the royal banner, the clan Chattan and clan Cameron deserted to the king; and in the engagement that followed Alexander was routed, and so hotly pursued that he felt himself compelled to yield. But instead of appearing in person, with tokens of submission and entreaties for mercy and forgiveness, he sent an embassy to treat with his sovereign upon terms of peace as if he had been an independent king! James indignantly repelled these proud advances and left his chief captains to finish the war by hunting the rebel to his last hiding-place; and finding that better might not be, Alexander was fain to commit himself unconditionally to the royal mercy. His mode of surrender was both abject and picturesque. On the day before the feast of St. Augustin James, with his queen, high officers, and nobles, was worshipping before the high altar in the church of Holyrood, when a miserable figure entered the church clothed only in shirt and drawers, who, on approaching the king, fell upon his knees and offered him his naked sword in token of entire surrender. This was none other than the high-born, proud, and powerful Lord of the

Isles, who, now abandoning his high pretensions, craved only the privilege to live. The queen and nobles seconded his intercessions, and James, receiving him to present mercy, sent him as prisoner to Tantallon Castle under the charge of William, Earl of Angus, his nephew, until further advice should be taken regarding his disposal. At the same time his mother, the Countess of Ross, was sent prisoner to the monastery of Columba in the island of Inchcolm. But clemency in the end prevailed, and after a short captivity both the island chief and the countess were released, the former being also restored to all his lands and possessions. A still more formidable prisoner was also released about the same period; this was the Earl of Douglas, whom James, for reasons which have not been stated, had sent to confinement. Douglas, as we have already seen, had been formerly imprisoned at the opening of the first parliament of this reign; and it is not impossible that the king, when he repaired to the Highlands, found it dangerous to allow such a proud and powerful nobleman to be at large. But by such proceedings the rivalry between the houses of Stewart and Douglas was daily ripening for hostile action, and their mutual hatred becoming more confirmed and incurable.

Although the submission of the Lord of the Isles had been so complete the obedience of his vassals to the Scottish crown was by no means a necessary consequence. Devoted as the wild islesmen may have been to their chief, there were limits beyond which his authority was powerless, and this especially where their turbulence and piratical practices were to be coerced by laws which they had been wont to laugh to scorn. Indignant, therefore, at the submission of his chief, Donald Balloch, a near kinsman of Alexander, renewed the rebellion, and having raised an army of congenial followers he crossed over to the mainland and disembarked at Lochaber, which he proceeded to ravage with fire and sword. Here he was opposed by a force still more numerous than his own, commanded by Alexander, Earl of Mar, the old intrepid victor of Harlaw, and Alan Stewart, Earl of Caithness. Undismayed, however, by the superiority of the royal army and the renown of its chief leader, the islesmen rushed to the encounter, and were victorious; the Earl of Caithness was slain, sixteen esquires of his own family, and many barons and gentlemen also fell beneath the heavy northern axe and two-handed broadsword; while Mar himself and the remains of his forces with difficulty secured their retreat. But notwithstanding his signal success Balloch was either unable to descend from the mountains or was satisfied with its

¹ *Scotichron.* l. xvi. c. 15.

plunder, for he appears to have retired as suddenly as he had landed; and, finding that the new laws of James could pursue him even among the thousand lurking-places of the Western Isles, he quickly lost heart, and was glad to make his escape to Ireland.¹

About the same period an event occurred in Caithness illustrative of the terrible character of Highland feuds, and the severe justice that was necessary to suppress them. Angus Dow and Angus of Moray, two chiefs who had been imprisoned by the king at Inverness and afterwards liberated with their companions in captivity, seem to have found the present period of tranquillity in the Lowlands a fitting opportunity to adjust their own personal quarrel, whatever it may have been. They came accordingly to Strathnavern, the appointed place of meeting, at the head of their armed vassals, and joined battle with such ferocity and perseverance, that out of twelve hundred combatants only nine remained alive.²

The precarious submission of the isles, as exhibited in the case of Balloch, and the dangerous spirit of the Celtic clans interrupted the legislative labours of James, who found himself once more obliged to have recourse to arms. To defray the expense of an expedition into the Highlands and Isles, which he resolved to conduct in person, he imposed a geld or land-tax over the kingdom of ten pennies in every pound instead of two pennies, which had formerly been levied, and of twelve pennies upon the lands which had been exempted from the payment of two.³ Having thus furnished himself with the sinews of war and mustered the feudal barons and retainers who owed military service to the crown, James advanced to Dunstaffnage and was about to pass over to the Isles, but was prevented by the arrival of the wild pirate chiefs, the late associates of Balloch, who, dreading the king's arrival, had thus hastened to throw themselves upon the royal clemency. The crimes and turbulence of the revolt had been intolerable, and before they were admitted to mercy these chiefs were obliged to apprehend and surrender three hundred of the principal rebels, who were hanged as thieves and traitors. As for Donald Balloch, their formidable leader, even Ireland could not shelter him from the vengeance of James, who sent messengers to the Irish chieftain who harboured him requiring that the rebel should be delivered into their hands. The Irish chief trembled and obeyed; and we are told that, to prevent every chance of Balloch's escape if he sent him to Scotland alive, by which his own willingness to obey

might be called in question, he caused the culprit to be put to death and sent his head as a token to the Scottish king.⁴

Amidst these merciless instances of wholesale retribution which were so accordant with the character of the people, one stern act of justice on the part of James reminds us of the resolution he expressed on his entrance into Scotland that he would make "the furze-bush keep the cow." A Highland chieftain notorious for his ferocity and deeds of rapine had carried off two cows belonging to a poor woman. She demanded back her property, but finding her intercessions useless, she solemnly swore that she would never wear shoes until she had laid her complaint before the king. "You lie!" roared the robber, "for I shall have you shod before you can reach him." He then fastened two small horse-shoes upon her naked feet by driving nails into the flesh, and threw her, bleeding and crippled, into the highway; "Now," he cried, "you go away shod—you may weep at home or carry your complaint to the king, just as you please." After the wounds were healed she travelled to the royal residence and told to James her story, showing the scars upon her feet to corroborate such a strange narrative. Melted with pity and indignant at this gross insult to his own authority, the king sent orders to the sheriff of the county instantly to arrest the monster, who was accordingly seized and sent bound to Perth, where a justice court was sitting. He was tried, found guilty, and sentenced; and that the punishment should bear a close analogy to his crime he was clothed by the king's command in a linen shirt upon which was painted a rude picture of the deed, paraded in chains and in this ignominious costume for two days through the streets of the town, and afterwards dragged at a horse's tail to the place of execution and there hanged.

In another instance James vindicated the sacredness of the royal dwelling as the home of law and justice, into which no rude violence should enter. A nobleman of high rank, who was also one of his own near kinsmen, happened to quarrel with another in the presence of the king and court and give his adversary a blow on the face. James immediately caused the offender to stretch out his hand upon the council table, and drawing his cutlass he gave it to him who had received the blow, and commanded him under pain of death to lop off that limb which had committed the offence. All were thunder-struck at the order; and while both criminal and executioner stood immovable like statues, the queen and her ladies, the prelates

¹ *Scotichron.* l. xvi. c. 17.² *Ibid.*³ *Acts of the Parliaments of Scotland.*

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⁴ *Buchanan*, b. x. parag. 33-36.

and priests who were present, threw themselves at the feet of James and implored him to remit the sentence. With him it was no mere parade of justice that dictated such a severe order, and they spent a whole hour in intercession before it was revoked. Even then, also, though the culprit was allowed to escape, it was not wholly without punishment, as he was banished for a season from the court and the royal presence.¹

During this protracted period in which James was employed in reducing the Highlands and Isles to settled order and tranquillity, his cares for the more civilized portion of his kingdom had been incessant; and the frequent meetings of parliament as well as the character of its enactments are lasting proofs of his solicitude. In these we perceive that his steadfast aim was on the one hand to suppress the exorbitant power of the nobles, and on the other to elevate the condition of the people; and that for both purposes he found it necessary to vindicate the rights of the crown, so that it might become the superior and arbiter of both parties alike. He had lived amidst the superior civilization and comfort of England, he had studied the laws and institutions of the country, and he had witnessed their happy effects upon every rank of the community under the vigorous administration of Henry IV. and his illustrious successor. It was natural in such a case that he should be ambitious of becoming the Alfred of Scotland, and that his legislation should so largely partake of the character and spirit of that of England. But unfortunately for his purposes the evils which he sought to remove had taken such deep root and in such a stubborn soil that even Alfred himself could scarcely have extracted them. The remedies also which James sought to introduce were not only from an unnatural but a hostile source, and it had long been an axiom among his countrymen that no good thing could come out of England. In these brief considerations we can comprise the character of his political labours during this period, as well as the opposition they encountered to the close of his active reign. But undaunted by these difficulties, he continued his course with a perseverance that merited a better fate. He was also encouraged with the prospect of a permanent establishment of the crown in his family by the birth of twin sons, of whom his queen was delivered on the 16th of October, 1430. The first-born of these was named Alexander and designed as his father's successor, but died in infancy; the second, named James, was afterwards king under the title of James II. In the year following the truce with Eng-

land had expired, and an opportunity thereby been opened for James, through the dissensions of that kingdom under the minority of Henry VI., of retaliating for his unjust captivity and the hard terms of his release. But James preferred the thankless and dangerous labour of restoring order among his people to the allurements of military glory or the gratification of personal resentment, and he renewed the truce for five years longer upon terms that were advantageous to both countries.

Amidst these provident cares of the Scottish king there occurred at this time a destructive calamity which no human wisdom could avert. It was a visit of the plague, and it was so swift or so erratic in its progress that it was denominated the "*pestilentia volatilis*" or flying plague. It first appeared at Edinburgh in February, 1430; and in the following year we find the uncertainty of its course indicated by the difficulty there was experienced of fixing conclusively upon the places of meeting at which the business of the state should be carried on. The proviso was therefore introduced when any particular locality for the purpose was specified, "provided the pestilence be not there." This terrible visitation was also aggravated by the evils of famine owing to the inclemency of the season and by the disturbed state of the Highlands, to which every public calamity was a fresh signal for revolt. This winged and shifting pestilence continued in Scotland for the space of three years, and when its havoc was at the height the public mind, already enervated, was horror-struck by a total solar eclipse which occurred on the 17th of June, 1432. The darkness, which was as deep as that of midnight, fell down upon the land at three o'clock in the afternoon, and lasted for thirty minutes, while its impression was so abiding that it was commemorated for many years afterwards in Scotland under the name of "the black hour."²

The state of affairs in England was now at such a crisis that a solid peace with Scotland, instead of a precarious truce, was the wish of her wisest politicians. Their rich conquest of France, which was so strangely interrupted by the Maid of Orleans, was now passing away; and the Duke of Bedford, who, as English regent of France, endeavoured to maintain the kingdom for his nephew, Henry VI., found himself engaged in an unequal and losing contest against an enemy whose courage had been raised by success. While such was the state of matters upon the Continent the English council of regency at home was rent by dissensions, in which the interests of the kingdom were sacri-

¹ *Scotichron.* l. xvi. c. 33.

² *Scotichron.*

ficed to the factious quarrels of its leaders, and especially of the Duke of Gloucester and the great Cardinal of Winchester. Under such circumstances a hostile Scottish army, whether marched into France or across the English Border, was a contingency to be carefully avoided. The character of the boy-king, Henry VI., was also of such unpromising imbecility as to give no prospect of relief to the prevalent disorders when he should have reached the age of manhood. The urgency of such motives we can easily detect in the English embassy which now arrived at the Scottish court, and the liberal offers which it tendered as the price of peace. These, which were delivered by Lord Scrope, the envoy, were abundantly tempting, being nothing less than the restoration of Roxburgh and Berwick to the Scots, together with every part of their country now in possession of England which had belonged to them in former periods. James convened his parliament at Perth in October, 1433, and before the high altar of the church in which they were assembled submitted the proposals for full deliberation. They were welcomed by the meeting collectively, who rejoiced in the prospect of a lasting peace upon such honourable and advantageous terms; but on the members being called one by one for their opinion the spirit of national discord was kindled afresh, and that, too, not by the warlike barons and secular statesmen, but by the reverend priests and prelates, headed by the abbots of Scone and Inchcolm, the latter being no other than Bower himself, the historian of the event. Their chief argument was that such a peace could not be honourably concluded with England on account of the family union and alliance of James with the King of France, which had been examined by the University of Paris and ratified by the pope. This objection and others of a similar nature occupied the day in useless discussion, and on the morrow when the subject was resumed it was more in the spirit of a peevish monastic discussion than that of a national senate deciding upon the question of peace or war. The arguments of his brethren at the previous meeting were now seconded by John Fogo, Abbot of Melrose, who argued that no person who depended on the will of another could abide by the divine laws, and that no king could lawfully swear to another that he would not make peace with a third, except by the consent of the second. As if to deepen and darken the controversy that was now waxing more unintelligible, Laurence of Lindores started up—Laurence the inquisitor, whose office was to watch over the orthodoxy of the Scottish Church, and who had formerly signal-

ized his zeal in the martyrdom of Resby. He saw, or fancied that he saw, some theological heresy lurking among the arguments of the clerical speakers, and this charge he hurled against the Abbot of Melrose, who was equally prompt in his reply. The result, as far as the real business at issue was concerned, might easily be guessed from this useless specimen of logomachy; the offers of England were not accepted, and the precarious relationship between the two countries remained as before.¹

But it was not merely in angry debate or mutual charges of heresy that the Scottish clergy of this period evinced their devotedness to the church, and near the same period that this discussion was held at the parliament of Perth the pile of martyrdom was once more kindled in Scotland. Its victim on this occasion was Paul Crawar, a Bohemian, who had been sent by the Hussites of Prague to establish a communication between them and their brethren the Scottish Wickliffites. This devoted missionary came in the character of a physician, and one of no ordinary eminence, as his credentials testified; but while he practised his art it was also found that he seized every opportunity of disseminating his religious opinions. The offence was capital and detection inevitable; and he was arraigned before the ecclesiastical court at St. Andrews, where there were also present the Bishops of Glasgow and Moray, the Abbot of Arbroath, and many of the Scottish nobility, while Laurence of Lindores attended as chief inquisitor, accuser, and disputant. Crawar's opinions, which are indigantly and with every epithet of abuse detailed by Bower in the *Scotichronicon*, were those of the Hussites of Bohemia, the Lollards of England, or, to come nigher their apostolic antiquity, the early Culdees of Scotland. His opinions, in common with these witnesses and confessors of the truth, were that the Scriptures, instead of being confined to the churchmen, should be imparted to all; that purgatory was a fable; and that the doctrine of the efficacy of priestly absolution and the existence of purgatory were human inventions and a gross delusion. The "power of the keys," the right to bind and to loose, and the independence of churchmen as the members of a spiritual government, he also rejected, and held that in earthly government the ecclesiastical power should be subservient to the civil, and that magistrates had the right to arraign and punish the civil trespasses of prelates and churchmen. The ritual of those from whom he was the delegate was also as primitive as their creed; they used in their

¹ *Scotichron.* l. xvi. c. 23-4.

public worship neither splendid vestments, set hours, nor appointed form of words except the Lord's Prayer; and in administering the sacrament of the Supper they merely read the institution as contained in the New Testament, and distributed the elements in their common form and character to all alike. Even by the acknowledgments of his enemies Paul Cawar on his trial made a most able defence, and showed not only a ready eloquence but great powers as a controversialist and a close acquaintanceship with the Scriptures; "but he was confuted," adds Bower, "by that venerable man, Master Laurence of Lindores, the Inquisitor of Heretical Pravity, who never gave rest within the king-

dom to heretics or Lollards." But as in other similar instances the doom of Cawar was sealed before he was either tried or confuted; the zeal of the assistants had been kindled into double fervour by the decrees of the Council of Basel, at which some of them had been present; and James, who had been a pupil of Henry IV. and his son, both of them relentless persecutors of the Wickliffites, was either infected by their bigoted example or in no mood to offend the church, whose services he so greatly needed, by interposing in behalf of a stranger and foreigner. Accordingly Paul Cawar was condemned, and on refusing to recant was committed to the flames, which he endured with the constancy of a martyr.

CHAPTER II.

REIGN OF JAMES I. (1433-1437).

Difficulty of James's attempt to suppress the feudal power of the nobles—His design to resume the earldom of March for the crown—Exorbitant power of the Earls of March—The earldom abrogated—The earldom of Mar lapses to the crown—Alarm and disappointment of the nobles at the growth of the royal power—The English invade Scotland—They are defeated at Piperden—The Princess Margaret sent to France to be married to the Dauphin—An English fleet unsuccessfully attempts to intercept her—James invades England—His hasty abandonment of the siege of Roxburgh—He holds his last parliament—Its proceedings—Conspiracy of the nobles against the king—Its principal causes—Sir Robert Graham its leader—He attempts to arrest the king in the meeting of parliament—Graham fails in his attempt, and is banished—He renounces his allegiance—His plot for the downfall and death of James—James repairs to Perth—Warnings and prophecies of his approaching fate—His last day of festival and life—Midnight assault of the conspirators upon his dwelling—His unsuccessful attempt to escape—His resistance and murder—Flight of the assassins—Their apprehension and execution—Trial of Sir Robert Graham—His remarkable defence—Cruel mode of his execution—Character and accomplishments of James I.—His national reforms—His children.

As the power of the Scottish aristocracy was the chief obstacle to those national reforms which James had so much at heart, he now proceeded to the task of its suppression with a steady and fearless step. It is impossible not to admire his courage in an enterprise where the difficulties were so great and the success so doubtful, while a failure was certain to bring ruin upon his own head. It is unfortunate that from the obscurity in which this early period of Scottish history still continues to be clouded we are unable to discover either the wisdom or the justice of several of his proceedings, so that some of them appear to savour of oppressive cruelty and others of downright rashness. This feudal power of the nobles, which was common over Europe, he was the first sovereign to assail, and that, too, in a kingdom where it had obtained its greatest predominance; and if he failed in an attempt which Louis XI. was afterwards to accomplish for France, and Henry VIII. for England, such a

result was inevitable, from the position he occupied and the strength of resistance that opposed him. The earliest attempts at great reforms are generally failures, and their first actors the martyrs of the commencing struggle. But the good cause goes onward invigorated by the example, and the first deed of its triumph is to consecrate the memory of the fallen. And such was James I. of Scotland. His reign, although so barren of striking and stirring incidents, is yet one of the most important in our annals, and only inferior to that of Bruce himself; while its disastrous close awakens a deeper sympathy than that which would have crowned his fall in a well-fought field while the shouts of victory were gladdening his departure.

True to his purpose of reducing these turbulent, irresponsible petty kings into peaceful and obedient subjects, James now prepared to strike a decisive blow at one of the highest of their order. This was George, Earl of March,

son of that nobleman who, in consequence of a personal affront, had renounced his allegiance and made common cause with the enemies of his afflicted country at a season when he could have best protected and advanced its interests. We have already related the leading incidents of his career, and his feats in arms at Homildon and Shrewsbury, until he was restored to his earldom and possessions through the favour of the Duke of Albany. His son George, the present earl, who seems to have inherited his father's valour without his political fickleness, does not appear to have carried arms against his countrymen except at the battle of West Nesbit, where he defeated them, while no other action of his has been recorded that could be brought against him as matter of accusation. But his especial crime, and one of the utmost political enormity, consisted in the greatness of his power and the extent of his possessions. From the importance of the Border territory over which they ruled with the power of independent sovereigns, and the number of strong castles which they held upon it, the earls of March had been thorns in the pillows of the Scottish kings since the days of David I.; and as the chief passes of the kingdom were in their keeping, it was usually said of them that they wore the keys of Scotland at their girdle. Late events had also shown how easily they could admit an English army into the country at pleasure, and how little reliance was to be placed upon their fidelity. It was full time that a power so dangerous in the hands of a subject should be withdrawn, and nothing but a fair pretext was wanting. And even already the earl had received both note of warning and time for preparation; for he was one of those nobles whom James had thrown into prison on his entrance into Scotland, from which he was only released that he might sit in trial on Duke Murdoch and his family.

The first proceeding of the king in this movement was signalized by a caution equal to his boldness. He committed the Earl of March to confinement in the castle of Edinburgh in 1433, although upon what ostensible charge we are not informed. He then sent William Earl of Angus, William Lord Crichton his chancellor, and Sir Adam Hepburn of Hales, with his letters patent to Dunbar, commanding the keepers of the castle to resign their charge; and these deputies being taken at unawares, and having no order from the earl to the contrary, immediately complied, upon which that stronghold was committed to the custody of Hepburn.¹ Having thus deprived the house of March of

their principal protection the king summoned a parliament, which assembled at Perth on the 10th of January, 1434. On the first day the time appears to have been chiefly occupied in selecting a committee of nine persons, consisting of three clergymen, three barons, and three burghesses, to hear and determine all causes of complaint that were brought before them. On the following day came on the great question of the earldom of March, for the trial of which there had undoubtedly been made some previous preparation. Could the estates of the late earl, which had reverted to the crown by his rebellion, be lawfully restored to him by the authority of the Duke of Albany? George of Dunbar was present with his counsel, and after their plea had been attentively heard, and their arguments discussed, they were ordered to retire until the verdict of the judges should be announced. And astounding to many, as well as crushing to its victim, must that verdict have been; for it was, that by the rebellion of the late earl all title of property and possession to the whole lands and earldom of March and lordship of Dunbar, with whatever other lands that baron held of the crown, had belonged, and did belong to the king, who of right might immediately enter into possession.² Thus suddenly fell the thunderbolt upon one of the strongest and noblest of Scottish heritages, and in a moment its grandeur was laid low. The now landless and bereaved earl was compelled to look on and be silent, for he was powerless to resist and too wise to remonstrate. James followed the decree by entering into possession and committing the permanent keeping of the castle of Dunbar to his trusty servant Sir Walter Haliburton of Dirleton; and that he might soften the infliction, he bestowed upon March the title of Earl of Buchan, and an annual pension of four hundred marks out of the revenues of that earldom. But this magnate was of too lofty a spirit to remain in a country as a stipendiary where his fathers had ruled as princes, and taking with him his son he departed once more an exile into England. We may imagine the lowering looks with which the nobility who attended the parliament contemplated this deed of daring on the part of the king; their gathering into knots, and briefly whispering to each other as they retired from that dreaded presence-chamber; and the desperate remedies which they half hinted to each other for the prevention of a similar visitation upon themselves. James, indeed, must have had his eyes open to the general feeling by exacting from the members of this parliament written promises of their fidelity to the queen

¹ *Scotichron.* l. xvi. c. 24.

² *Acts of the Parliaments of Scotland*, vol. ii. p. 22.

before they had retired to their homes. It was the only precaution which he could adopt for the preservation of order should his career be cut short, whether by the assassin's dagger or open insurrection.

About the same time that James enriched the crown by resuming the estates of the Earl of March, he was further aggrandized by the death of the Earl of Mar, whose earldom and possessions, as he was of illegitimate birth and without offspring, reverted to the king. Of this restless, able, and enterprising character we have already given a full account. By these acquisitions James was now more effectually enabled to make head against the ambitious nobles and reward his friends and supporters; but they were a source of weakness as well as strength, in consequence of the disappointment which was excited among those who may have hoped to share in the spoil. They must have also dreaded the power with which he was now invested when they saw the rich possessions of Duke Murdoch and his sons, and finally the earldoms of Buchan and Mar, added to the royal acquisitions. Thus royalty and feudality were arrayed against each other in more deadly antagonism than ever, and each only waited the opportunity for the suppression or destruction of the other.

Although the truce still subsisted between England and Scotland, the mutual rancour of the borderers of both countries had risen to that height in which truce and peace were to be equally disregarded. From some cause, therefore, which has not been mentioned Sir Robert Ogle, with a strong body of knights and men-at-arms, made an inroad into Scotland on the 10th of September, 1435, but was met near Piperden by William, Earl of Angus, Adam Hepburn of Hales, and Alexander Ramsay of Dalwolsie. Ogle was completely routed; forty of his followers were killed, and nearly all the rest of his band, with himself, were taken prisoners. James loudly complained of this breach of the truce to the English regency, but without effect.¹

As the Dauphin of France had now reached his thirteenth year, and the Princess Margaret, the daughter of James, her tenth, it was judged necessary to complete the marriage which had been negotiated for the parties during their childhood. Two French envoys arrived in Scotland to betroth the bride, and she was sent to France with a splendid escort. The fleet was commanded by William Sinclair, Earl of Orkney; and in the train of Margaret were John, Bishop of Brechin, Sir Walter Ogilvy, the treasurer,

with many other barons and a hundred and forty squires, and a guard of a thousand men-at-arms, who were conveyed in three large galleys and six barges. But the rejection of a lasting peace by the Scots, notwithstanding the humbling terms that had been offered, rankled in the minds of the English, and they were also eager to interrupt a marriage by which France and Scotland would be so closely united against them. Without caring, therefore, about the truce, which was still continuing, they fitted out a large fleet for the purpose of intercepting the peaceful armament and bringing Margaret, like her father, a prisoner to London. The English ships anchored off the coast of Bretagne; but while they were on the outlook for the Scots a squadron of Flemish merchant ships laden with wine from Rochelle unexpectedly hove in sight. The tempting opportunity drew the English from their watch, and crowding all sail they overtook, boarded, and captured these well-laden argosies, but had scarcely time to broach a single cask of the good wine that had allured them from their post when a Spanish fleet bore down upon them, recovered the spoil, and drove the captors off the station. It was during this critical period that the Scottish ships, which had altered their course on learning the intentions of the English, arrived in triumph in the port of Rochelle, after which the young princess repaired to Tours, where the marriage ceremony was performed with great magnificence. Upon such an occasion James, by the feudal law, was entitled to demand a subsidy from his people; but as yet they continued to be too poor for such an impost, and he generously contented himself with the presents which the nobles and clergy were wont to give upon the marriage of one of the children of royalty.

It could scarcely be expected that James would overlook the late aggressions of the English, and especially that by which the safety of his daughter had been imperilled. It is also thought that he was anxious, by a war with England, to give occupation to his turbulent nobility, whom he found too difficult to rule during a season of tranquillity. He therefore collected what must have been a very large army for Scotland,² but ill provided and worse disciplined owing to the long season of peace

¹ *Scotichron.* l. xvi. c. 25.

² Bower gives 400,000 men as the number of this army, and endeavours to account for such an incredible array by the mode of raising it and the materials of which it was composed. "*Submonuit indistinctè omnes seculares, transigentes annos discretionis, i.e. intra decimum sextum et sexagesimum, nullis excipiendis, præter pastores et custodes boum arabilium, et paucorum officiarium et servitorum prælatorum et qui de necessitate et merito forent excusandi.*"—*Scotichron.* xvi. 25. We question if even such an indiscriminate press could have mustered a third of the number

that had preceded, and commenced hostilities with the siege of Roxburgh. But for such an enterprise it was soon apparent that his army was unfitted, and for fifteen days they straggled round the town, wasting their whole artillery and missiles without either hurt to the enemy or honour to themselves. It was evident, indeed, that James was at the head of nothing better than a mob, and that its only safety was a hasty retreat. Little, too, could be expected from his barons, who probably regarded James as a worse enemy to their interests than even England itself. To account, also, for this hasty abandonment of the campaign some have asserted that the queen arrived secretly at his camp with accounts of a conspiracy which was forming against him at home. Be this as it may, James hastily withdrew and disbanded his army.

On the 22d of October, 1436, two months after he had dismissed his forces, James held his last parliament at Edinburgh. Its proceedings gave no indication of alarm about plots and conspiracies, having reference chiefly to commercial proceedings, which were characterized by the narrow spirit of the age. To promote the importation of money into Scotland merchants were required to bring three ounces of bullion for every sack of wool they exported, and the same amount was laid upon hides and Hamburgh barrels, the delivery of the silver being also regulated by weight or measure and not by value. No English cloth was to be brought by Scottish merchants into Scotland, and no English merchant was to bring any without special permission. English traders also were not to be permitted to carry any articles of Scottish trade or manufacture out of the kingdom unless they were specified in their letters of safe-conduct. No Scotchman was to sell salmon to the English unless the latter had a safe-conduct and paid in English money; and no person was to remove gold, silver, or jewels out of Scotland. In this way the spirit of commerce was checked and its progress crippled by enactments designed to promote it.¹

But while these proceedings were going onward a dark conspiracy was on foot and the days of James were numbered. Amidst that wholesale imprisonment of the supporters of the house of Albany by which the king's return to Scotland in 1425 was signalized was Sir Robert Graham, who after a short confinement obtained his liberty. This insult to a proud spirit was aggravated two years afterwards by James' resumption of the earldom of Strathern, on the plea that it was a male fief, although Patrick Graham, brother of the above-men-

tioned Sir Robert, by his marriage to the only daughter of David, Earl of Strathern, had succeeded in right of his wife to the earldom. But the royal grasp was now laid both upon title and possessions, upon the plea that they could only descend to heirs male, and that these having failed, the crown was now the lawful occupant. It was an unjust and oppressive claim according to the laws of feudal succession; and its injustice was enhanced by the fact that Malise Graham, son of the last Earl of Strathern and nephew of Sir Robert Graham, was now in England instead of being present to vindicate his own rights. But James, in his resolution to break the power of the nobility, seems to have overlooked the unpopularity of his proceeding; he also seems to have forgot the alarm which it must have excited among not a few of the nobility whose title and estates were held through a female succession. He endeavoured, indeed, to mitigate its severity by conferring upon the Earl of Athole, brother of Earl David, in whom the male succession failed, the liferent of the lapsed earldom, while he created a new earldom of Menteith in favour of the dispossessed Malise. But these attempts, instead of conciliating, appear to have only irritated all parties, who probably regarded them as mere proofs of weakness and abject apologies for injustice. A party was already formed around which the discontented nobles could rally, and a cause of offence given that might justify their resistance. Its nominal head was Walter Stewart, Earl of Athole and son of Robert II., now a very old man, but not the less accessible to ambition, and who was thought to have hoped that the removal of James would prepare his own way to the throne. But the soul of the conspiracy was Sir Robert Graham, the John de Procida of a rude country, who added to the ferocity and vindictiveness of too many Scottish nobles an amount of learning, eloquence, craft, and talent to which they could lay no claim, and who more than others seems to have resembled that able knight of Ramorny, under whose machinations the unfortunate brother of James had perished in the dungeons of Falkland.²

With such a conspirator, heated by family and personal injuries, the cause in which he had embarked was not likely to pause. To the nobles he represented the vindictiveness of the

¹ *Acts of the Parliaments of Scotland*, vol. ii. p. 23.

² In the account which follows of the last days and death of James I. we have taken for our authority the ample, minute, and clear statement written by John Shirley about the year 1440, and translated by him from a Latin relation of the event supposed to have been published in Scotland by authority. This tract has been published by Pinkerton in his *Appendix to the History of Scotland*, vol. i. No. 13, and in the *Miscellanea Scotica*, vol. ii.

king in the executions of the family of Albany, and the insecurity of their possessions amidst the royal claims and resumptions, while he inflamed the commons by sympathizing in their complaints of the new imposts which their half-English sovereign had laid upon them. When all was thought matured for open resistance Sir Robert Graham thus addressed his brethren assembled in council:—"Sirs, if ye will firmly stand by that which I shall say to the king in your hearing, I trust to God that we shall find a good remedy and help." The nobles assented and expressed their confidence in his wisdom, discretion, and courage. It was no secret stroke which they meditated, but an open appeal to the law that might warrant the arrest of the king, and perhaps his deposition—a right which the Scottish aristocracy claimed over royalty itself when it was thought to exceed its limitations. Accordingly at the next meeting of parliament, where the king and three estates were assembled according to established usage in one common hall, Graham, confident in his supporters, boldly produced his charge against the sovereign's tyranny and misgovernment, and ended by advancing to the royal seat and laying hands upon the king's person. "I arrest you," he cried, "in the name of all the three estates of your realm here now assembled; for even as your liege people are bound and sworn to obey your majesty, in the same wise are you sworn and ensured to preserve your people and to keep and administer your laws so that you do them no wrong, but in all right maintain and defend them." Then turning to the nobles who had promised to second him he exclaimed, "Is it not thus as I say?" Had the expected assent been given James in a few moments would have been a prisoner; but confounded by Graham's over-boldness, upon which it is probable they had not reckoned, the nobles were silent, while the king promptly availed himself of their irresolution by ordering the instant arrest and imprisonment of the daring traitor. With an indignant scowl at the cowardice of his associates and muttering a sarcastic rebuke, Sir Robert was dragged away to prison, and shortly afterwards was punished by a sentence of banishment and the confiscation of all his goods and estates to the crown.

To let loose an enemy so able and determined was an oversight on the part of James for which we cannot account, more especially as he had hitherto shown so little scruple in the execution of traitors of still higher rank and power. It may be that his indignation at the daring proceeding of Graham was mingled with respect for a boldness so like his own and sympathy on account of the abandonment that

required it. It is thus that rough bold natures can be moved when submission and tears would be useless. In consequence of his sentence of banishment Sir Robert betook himself to the Highlands, to brood among its dismal recesses over his wrongs and mature his plans of vengeance. Hitherto he had confined his hostility within the bounds of law, and in his attempted arrest of the king had announced it as the prelude of an open trial for violations on the part of James of his royal prerogative. But this he could no longer carry out, and therefore would not attempt it; he would now make war upon the king as a man with his equal who had wronged him beyond forgiveness, and whom he would hunt and combat to the death. His first proceedings upon this resolution were characterized by such a feudal formality as showed how much he scorned the charge of being either traitor or assassin. By proclamation and by letters he formally renounced his allegiance to the king; he defied him as a tyrant who had ruined himself, his family, and his heritage; and he declared that he would slay him with his own hand as his mortal enemy wherever he could find time or opportunity. This strange defiance and proclamation of open war by a vagabond and rebel against his king was too extravagant to excite any feeling in the mind of James but that of contemptuous indignation; and he made proclamation over the whole kingdom that whosoever should slay Sir Robert Graham or bring him a prisoner to the king should be rewarded with three thousand demies of gold, each demy being worth half an English noble.

Soon after this a parliament was summoned to meet at Edinburgh, and there Graham, though a hunted fugitive in the Highlands, made his influence felt and dreaded. He sent private messages and letters to the discontented nobles and the friends and retainers of the house of Albany, reminding them of their wrongs and inciting them to be up and doing. He also offered to take upon himself the slaying of the king if they would but give their consent and countenance to the deed. This act he represented to be necessary on account of the tyranny and covetousness of James, who if not cut short in his career would destroy the whole realm of Scotland. But it was with the old and ambitious Earl of Athole that the politic rebel chiefly tampered, and with arguments best fitted to persuade him. The earl, as the son of Robert II. by his second marriage, might succeed to the crown should James, and his son, a boy only six years old, be set aside; but should the earl himself decline this weighty honour he had still his grandson, Sir Robert Stewart, upon

whom he might devolve the royal succession. These inducements had their full effect not only upon the doting old man but upon his young grandson, a more dangerous conspirator still; for he was not only "a full gentle squire, fresh, lusty, and right amiable," and therefore little to be suspected, but also an intimate and favourite of the king, who loved him as his own son. Thus, with traitors not only in the court but in his own palace and bed-chamber, and even in his bosom, the dark conspiracy was so effectually ripened that the escape of James was impossible.

There is a melancholy interest in the last hours of such a king, and around whom such a network of treachery was closing, while apparently he apprehended no danger. The din of hostility had passed away, and the conspirators were blandly silent; but it was because they had made sure of their victim. And yet, if the ancient accounts are to be believed, supernatural warnings were not wanting. James had resolved to hold his Christmas at Perth, in the course of one of his justiciary progresses, and was about to cross the Forth from Edinburgh with his courtiers, when a Highland woman of wild appearance suddenly rose before him and cried in a loud voice, "My lord the king, if you pass this water you shall never return alive!" James was astonished, for he had lately read a prophecy, that on this year the King of Scots should be slain. Musing over the coincidence with a mind not wholly raised above the superstitions of the age, the king, as he rode along, ordered one of his knights to turn back and inquire of the woman what she meant by her prediction; but she only repeated that the king would lose his life if he crossed the water. On the knight further inquiring how she came by that knowledge, she replied that "Huthart told her so"—a name perhaps assumed for the demon or familiar with whom she pretended to hold converse. The messenger rode back to his master with the report that the woman was a drunken fool, and knew not what she said; and the matter being thus disposed of, the whole party crossed the Forth. Arrived in Perth, the king and retinue took up their abode in the monastery of the Dominicans or Black Friars, a noble building, and ample enough for the residence of a royal train, while glee and festival according to the usage of that holy season went on without pause. On the last of these days of revelry and the last of his life James, while playing at chess with one of his knights, who for his gallantry was called the "King of Love," thus sportively addressed him in allusion to these bodements: "Sir King of Love, it is not long ago since I read a prophecy, that on this year a king should

be slain in this country; and you wot well, Sir Alexander, that there are no more kings in this realm than you and I. Therefore I counsel you to be well on your guard, for I let you to wit that I shall look sufficiently to my own safety."

While James was thus cheerful and debonaire to the last, his enemies had not been idle. Graham, who had been aware of the king's purpose to spend his Christmas at Perth, a town so closely bordering upon the Highlands, had stolen into it with three hundred savage mountaineers, and was only waiting the approach of darkness and silence to commence his murderous onset upon the monastery. The infamous traitor within its walls, Sir Robert Stewart, whom James loved so dearly, used his office of chamberlain to prepare the way for the assassins; and by his directions wooden boards were placed across the moat that girdled the monastery, and the locks and bolts that secured the royal bed-chamber had been secretly removed or rendered useless. As the evening went onward the mirth and enjoyment increased: there was playing at chess and tables [draughts], reading romances, singing, piping, harping, and "other honest solaces." And even yet the voice of warning could enter in, but only to be unheeded. A squire, a favourite of the king, in the midst of conversation said to him, "My lord, I dreamed that to-night Sir Robert Graham would kill you;" but he was checked by the Earl of Orkney, who commanded him to tell no such tales in the royal presence. One of the traitors, Christopher Chambers, who had been a squire of the Duke of Albany, and whose heart began to fail him at the last moment, approached the king three several times for the purpose of warning him of the conspiracy, but as often drew back in silence. A loud knocking was heard at the door of the hall, and when the usher opened, wondering at the coming of a visitor at an hour so late, there stood before him only the poor Highland prophetess, who had followed the train to Perth, and now sought audience of the king. It is not unreasonable to suppose, that she had learned the plot that was matured among her native mountains from a surer source than that of Celtic second-sight or divination. Moved by her importunity the door-keeper reported her wish to the king, and told him that she was the same woman who had accosted him so strangely upon the opposite side of the firth; but James, who was in the full height of enjoyment, carelessly answered, "Let her come to-morrow." When this answer was reported to her she sadly replied, "It shall repent you all, that ye will not let me speak now with the king;" and with these words she departed.

An hour after this last of opportunities had been thrown away James drank the *voidee* or parting-cup; the company dispersed, Athole and Stewart being the last who left him; and the king having disencumbered himself of his chief articles of clothing, was jesting with the queen and her ladies before retiring to rest. But all at once a hideous uproar was heard from without, mixed with the rattling of harness, the tramp of armed men, and a sudden glare of torches. Treason was within the walls, and the king at that moment thought of Sir Robert Graham. The ladies rushed to the chamber-door that led to the great hall, and found that Stewart had left it open; they then attempted to make it fast, but the locks had been rendered useless. Requesting the ladies to secure it as well as they could, so as to interpose a short delay, James hurried to the windows; but they were so strongly crossed with iron bars that he could not force an opening. As every moment brought his enemies nearer he wrenched up with the tongs a plank in the chamber floor, and let himself down into a vault that was beneath, taking care to replace the plank when he had descended. Even through this dark and noxious recess he might have effected his escape into the deserted court-yard, and thence into the town by a small passage through the stone wall; but this he had caused to be closed up three days previous, because, in playing at his favourite game in the tennis-court without, the balls had been lost in the aperture. The numerous band of conspirators rushed forward armed with axes, swords, and bills, and had reached the bed-chamber door, which Catherine Douglas endeavoured to secure; and finding the bolt removed, the heroic woman thrust her arm into the staple, but it was instantly snapped in two by the violence of the comers. One of them even wounded the queen, who stood half undressed and motionless with terror, and would have slain her had not one of Graham's sons exclaimed, "What will you do? Shame upon you! She is but a woman: let us seek the king." They searched not only the room but all the neighbouring apartments, and every place where a man could be concealed, while each moment increased the chance of their victim's escape and their own apprehension, as their din had alarmed the town, and was summoning the king's friends to the rescue. In the meantime James was impatient at his confinement; and hearing no noise above he imagined that the pursuers had left the building. He therefore ordered the women to bring sheets and draw him up from the vault; but while they were thus employed Elizabeth Douglas, one of the queen's ladies, fell down into the vault beside him. The conspirators after

their fruitless search were beginning to despair, when Robert Chambers,¹ one who had formerly been in frequent attendance upon the king, and was well acquainted with the building, called to mind the small recess that was under the bed-chamber; and, leading them back to the apartment, they saw the loosened plank, which they raised, and by the light of a torch which he held down for the purpose he showed them the king and his unfortunate companion in bondage. "Sirs," he cried to his fellows with savage merriment, "here is the bridegroom on whose account we have come, and for whom we have carolled here all night long!" Sir John Hall, one of the conspirators, leaped down into the vault armed with a large knife; but James, whose strength was doubled by despair, seized the ruffian by the shoulders and threw him down with great violence under his feet. A brother of Hall then descended; but him the king seized by the throat and threw him down upon the other, while such was the force of his grasp in both cases that for a month after their skin bore the deep impress of his fingers. If the king could have maintained the unequal struggle only a little longer he might yet have been saved, for his friends were already hurrying to the monastery; but his hands were gashed and powerless from the knives of his two assailants, while the relentless arch-traitor, Sir Robert Graham, had now come down upon him sword in hand. James had recourse to supplication, but was answered with, "Tyrant! thou hadst never mercy upon lords born of thy blood, or on gentlemen that came within thy power; therefore no mercy shalt thou have here!" "At least," said the king, "for the salvation of my soul, I beseech you to let me have a confessor." "No other confessor shalt thou have than this sword!" cried Graham, plunging his weapon to the hilt in the body of James, who fell mortally wounded, but still continued his supplications. Moved by the agony and piteous entreaties of his victim Graham paused and seemed irresolute; but the other conspirators urged him to complete the deed, threatening that otherwise they would slay him with their own hands. By this time the Halls had recovered their feet, and all three fell upon the king, whom they soon despatched with sixteen deadly wounds.

Having thus executed the chief part of the tragic deed the conspirators sought the queen, intending to complete the work by her death also; but in her night attire, and with her hair dishevelled, she had fled from the bed-chamber as soon as their attention had been directed to

¹ In the same narrative a few lines after he is called Thomas.

her husband. Her cries woke the royal attendants who were lodged in the monastery; the alarmed citizens of Perth were advancing to the gate, and the court nearest the king's lodging was quickly filled with the gleam of drawn swords and torches. It was time for the conspirators to fly for their own lives, and they hastily recrossed the moat; but their flight was discovered by Sir David Dunbar, brother of the dispossessed Earl of March, who was the first to come to the king's rescue, and who now gave chase to the fugitives but ineffectually; for though he slew one of their number, a man of mean rank, he was himself severely wounded in the encounter, while the whole band and their leaders reached the Highlands in safety. In their flight they bitterly regretted that they had spared the queen, who had given the alarm, and who would now be indefatigable in her vengeance.

Events soon showed that these fears were well founded: the sight of the king's mangled body and the horrid particulars of his death inflamed all ranks and parties alike against the murderers, while the queen, who by the late oaths of parliament inherited the royal authority, had ample means to pursue as well as power to punish them. In these circumstances the influence of the Highland chiefs could not protect them, nor even the caves and fastnesses of the mountains give them shelter or concealment, so that before a month had expired the whole conspirators were apprehended, tried, and condemned. The first to suffer were Sir Robert Stewart, the ungrateful favourite and traitorous chamberlain; and Christopher Chambers, who had silenced the voice of his good angel on the night of the king's murder after he had been three times moved to give timely warning. They were doomed to die, but first to endure public tortures, the very mention of which would be torture to tell or hear; but they suffered patiently and acknowledged the justice of the very worst that was inflicted: even their enormous villany seemed to be half atoned by the fulness of their penitent confession, and their mild but unflinching endurance. After them came the turn of the Earl of Athole, who had been apprehended by the Earl of Angus. On being tried and condemned he was bound to a public pillar in the town of Perth, and in derision of his ambitious hopes a crown of paper having on it thrice written the word *TRAITOR*, was placed upon his gray dishonoured head. He hoped to the last that this infliction would be the utmost, for, as he said, he had been in no way consenting to the death of the king, although he was aware of the conspiracy; and he had only concealed his knowledge of it because Sir Robert Stewart,

his grandson, was one of its chief accomplices. He had also attempted to dissuade the young man from his purpose, and thought that he had succeeded. But this equivocal plea did not save him: he was led to the scaffold and beheaded; and his head, surmounted by an iron crown, was set upon a spear and exposed to public view in Edinburgh.

Amidst these and other executions that followed the fate of Sir Robert Graham was the most conspicuous. Being the master-traitor, he was the chief object of pursuit; and he was arrested with several of his accomplices by two Highland chiefs, and sent to Stirling to abide his trial. His conduct on this occasion was marked by the superior talent and daring that had characterized his whole proceedings. He told his judges that they had no law to execute him, as the king was his deadly enemy, whom he had publicly abjured and defied by letters signed with his name and sealed with his coat of arms. If, therefore, they tried him according to the laws of warfare and statutes of arms they ought to let him go free, as the king would have destroyed him had he been able. In putting the king to death, therefore, as his enemy, he had committed neither wrong nor sin except in destroying one of God's creatures. But these legal abstractions weighed little with the court, who only looked to the fact that they had lost the best of sovereigns, and that he had fallen by the hand of a rebellious subject who was now impanelled at their bar. Finding that his arguments and appeals were useless he indignantly burst forth in the following remarkable speech:—"O ye all so sinful, wretched, and merciless Scottish folk, without prudence and full replete of unadvised folly! know well that I shall now die and may not escape your venomous judicial hands. For by will and not by right nor law ye have condemned my body to the death—the which God suffereth me at this time to receive of you for no desert of this accusation on which you condemn me now, but for other offences and trespasses that I in the vain times of my youth have displeased him in. Yet doubt not that ye shall see the day and the time that ye shall pray for my soul for the great good that I have done to you and to all this realm of Scotland, that I have thus slain and delivered you of so cruel a tyrant—the greatest enemy the Scots or Scotland might have, considering his unstaunchable covetousness in his youth against all nature, his tyranny immeasurable without pity or mercy to sibb or to freme [kindred or stranger], to high or to low, to poor or to rich." He was condemned to die, and the sentence was inflicted with such accompaniments of tor-

ture as the wildest savages of North America could scarcely have devised. It was not wonderful that under them his iron resolution yielded and that his anguish broke forth in complaints and lamentations. "This that ye do to me," cried the miserable man, "is only through rigour of immeasurable tyranny. All the world may call you Scots tyrants, for man cannot with life endure the painful torment that you inflict upon me. I doubt me full sore that if you continue thus your tortures upon my wretched person, through the pain ye will constrain me to renounce my Creator. And if I so do, I appeal you before God, the high and chief judge of all mankind according to their deserts at the universal doom, that ye have been the very cause of the loss of my soul." Moved with momentary compassion, he was taken down by order of the judges and thrown into prison; but when he was finally led forth to execution the bitterness of death was inflicted on him in double measure after he had swooned with pain and been recovered to witness the death of his son, who was hanged, drawn, and quartered before his eyes. Such was the end of Sir Robert Graham, in which it is hard to tell whether his crime or its punishment was the most atrocious. Worthy also of pity were the poor Highland catherans who were executed at the same period, for like the men who followed Absalom they had gone "in their simplicity," little guessing that a king's murder was the object of their expedition. On the contrary, they were told that it was to obtain a bride for Sir Robert Stewart, and that she was to be carried off by force from the royal residence. Such an exploit was congenial to their rude ideas of adventurous courtship, and they implicitly followed their leaders, only to die with them on the scaffold.

In this revolting manner was the life of James I. terminated in the thirteenth year of his reign. In person he was of the middle size, or perhaps rather under it, but strongly built; while his excellence in martial and athletic exercises, as archery, wielding the lance, horsemanship, wrestling, running, and hurling the stone or quoit, was such that few of his subjects could compete with him. But still greatly more important although less appreciated was his intellectual superiority over the rude people whom he was called to rule. He not only sang beautifully and played skilfully upon the harp and the organ, but was a musical composer; and in this department the airs and sacred pieces which he produced were so distinguished by their excellence and originality as to stamp a new impress upon the national music of Scotland. Of still greater account was his character as a poet,

which falls to be noticed in a different portion of this history. As a ruler, politician, and legislator his only errors seem to have been an attempt to accomplish a national reform that was too extensive for the short life of any one sovereign, and the merciless unswerving eagerness with which he pursued his object. On this account he was fated to be one of those many examples which suffice to show that the growth of society at large cannot be hurried onward as may be done in the case of a chosen few; and that in the rebellious recoil of the community no individual, however talented, can make head against the reaction. It is more gratifying to remark that, notwithstanding the immediate failure, neither the labours nor the death of James were in vain. In seeking to free and civilize his people his proceedings instructed and his failure warned the benefactors who were to follow in his track; and the great work which he commenced, although it was continued with a slower progress, was also more in accordance with time and circumstances, and more certain of success.

The beneficial reforms which James effected during his short reign, and the completion of which he lived to witness, may be traced in the history of his proceedings. His chivalrous love of justice and his resolution to impart its privileges to all classes alike were manifested in his enactments for the behoof of the commons, and in his readiness to punish transgressors, be their rank what it might. His solicitude that all might know their duty, so that none should offend through ignorance and be punished as if they were voluntary culprits, made him also change the language of parliamentary edicts from monkish Latin, which few but the clergy could understand, into the vernacular that was common to all, and thus both judge and offender were aware of what the statute required. His desire also that law should rule instead of his own arbitrary fiat was evinced in his care for the improvement of parliamentary representation and the frequency with which his parliaments were assembled, so that not less than fourteen were held during the thirteen years of his reign. As these changes were such manifest improvements, and withal so urgently needed, it is not to be wondered at if the proceedings of James in effecting them partook sometimes of the character of imperious haste, and at others of absolute cruelty. If wisdom to detect the prevalent evils and courage to assail them are important qualities in the work of reformation, a higher still, and one which few indeed possess, is the patience that can listen to the cavils and bear with the opposition of those whom the movement is to benefit.

James left only one son, who succeeded him under the title of James II., and five daughters, of whom Margaret, the eldest, as we have already mentioned, was married to the Dauphin of France, afterwards Louis XI. She is described as having been not only beautiful and accomplished but possessing much of her father's genius, and especially his love of poetry, as was manifested both by her own verses and her admiration of distinguished poets.¹ Unfortunately she was mated to one of the coldest-hearted and most depraved princes of the age; and she died

at the early age of twenty-two, broken in spirit in consequence of the slanders of one of his infamous favourites. Isabella, the second daughter of James, was married to Francis, Duke of Bretagne. The third, Eleanor, also distinguished by literary tastes, married Sigismund, Duke of Austria; and her younger sister Mary was wedded to the Count de Boncquan, son of the Lord of Campvere. Jane, the youngest, instead of a royal and foreign alliance, had for her husband the Earl of Angus, and afterwards the Earl of Morton.

CHAPTER III.

REIGN OF JAMES II. (1437-1451).

Historical difficulties of the reign of James II.—Necessity of confining its narrative to a general outline—The nobility of Scotland at the accession of James II.—Coronation of the young king—Government appointed during his minority—The chief power in the state invested in Crichton and Livingston—Truce renewed with England—Condition of England at this period—Power of the Earl of Douglas and lawlessness of his followers—Ambitious competition between Crichton and Livingston—James II. secretly conveyed from the keeping of Crichton to that of Livingston—Crichton applies ineffectually for aid to the Earl of Douglas—Crichton and Livingston unite for the suppression of the earl—Disturbed state of Scotland—Feuds and conflicts of the nobles—The queen-mother again marries—She and her husband are imprisoned by Livingston—Renewal of the feud between Crichton and Livingston—Crichton recovers possession of the king's person—Agreement between the rivals—Growing troubles of the country—Parliamentary enactments to suppress them—Crichton and Livingston plot against the Earl of Douglas—They invite the earl and his brother to Edinburgh—Treacherous arrest of the two Douglasses in the castle of Edinburgh—Their hasty trial and execution—Ambitious proceedings of William, the new Earl of Douglas—His marriage with the Fair Maid of Galloway—Marriage of a daughter of James I. to the son of the Duke of Bretagne—Peaceful relations of Scotland with foreign countries—Growing power of the Douglasses—Conflicts between the parties of Douglas and Crichton—Battle of Arbroath between the Lindsays and Ogilvies—Death of the Earl of Crawford—Feudal hatred of the conflict—Death of the queen-mother Joanna—Bond of alliance between the Earls of Douglas, Crawford, and Ross—Counter-alliance of James II. and his supporters—Arrest of the Livingstons—Execution of Alexander Livingston—Agreement of the marriage of James II. to the daughter of the Duke of Gueldres—Renewal of Border invasions between the English and Scots—Defeat of the English at Sark—Cessation of hostilities—Marriage of James to Mary of Gueldres—Terms of the marriage treaty—Tournament at Stirling to celebrate the marriage—The Earl of Douglas deprived of his offices—His arrogant and cruel treatment of Sir William Colville—The Earl of Douglas leaves Scotland—His journey to Italy—His reception at Rome—Mismanagement of his affairs in his absence—His hasty return home—His secret intrigues with the Yorkists in England—His humble apologies and feigned submission to the king—His attempt to assassinate Crichton—His unjust imprisonment and execution of Herries of Terregles—Increasing arrogance and oppressions of the Earl of Douglas—He imprisons Maclellan of Bomby—The king sends a message for the liberation of Maclellan—Strange reception of the royal messenger by the earl—His treacherous execution of Maclellan.

It is unfortunate for Scottish history that the accounts we possess of the reign of James II.,

important in itself, and well filled with stirring events, are so contradictory and obscure. With the close of the previous reign we lose the guidance of Bower, and are obliged to have recourse to the testimony of Boece, as given by his translators and commentators, Lindsay, Mair, and Balfour. Hence the irregularity of dates and opposition of statements by which many of the important facts are frequently obscured, and the difficulty of ascertaining their real purpose and bearing; hence also the contradictory characters

¹ An anecdote illustrative of this admiration of Margaret has been frequently repeated. Passing Alain Chartier, the great French troubadour of the day, while he was asleep in the saloon of the palace, she stooped down and kissed him. On her ladies showing their astonishment at such a proceeding she stated that it was not the man she kissed but the mouth that uttered such beautiful sentiments. It was easy upon such unadvised frankness of conduct to engraft those foul accusations under which she died broken-hearted.

assigned to the principal actors and the impossibility of guessing their motives or tracing their consistency. In such a case we are obliged to content ourselves with a general outline, and whatever can be added to it from cautious theory and conjecture.

We have already noticed the terrible vengeance inflicted on the murderers of James I. In this deed the queen appears to have been the principal actor, and the nobles her assistants. But whether these nobles were animated by a righteous love of justice, or even by the feudal duty of revenge, may be very reasonably questioned. The great task of James during his short reign of fourteen years had been to abridge their power and punish their lawlessness; and events had shown that even their greatest were unable to withstand the energy of his purpose. But this career had been cut short; and during the minority that was to follow, an opportunity would be found to repossess themselves of more than their former ascendancy. That such were their hopes and their purposes was evinced by their subsequent conduct; and Sir Robert Graham, who knew them well, could safely predict that the time would come when they would bless his memory for having freed them from a tyrant. With cordial unanimity, therefore, they transferred their allegiance to the new king, James II., who was now only six years of age. Immediately after his father's death the queen had conveyed him for safety to the castle of Edinburgh; and from the same precaution the coronation was performed in the palace of Holyrood instead of the monastery of Scone, which was nigh the place of the late king's murder, and might still be haunted by the kindred of the regicides. This coronation, although so deprived of its ancient national essentials, was greeted with universal gladness, and was solemnized on the 25th of March, 1437, twenty-six days after the death of his father, and while justice was still in pursuit of the murderers. At the parliament which was held for the installation of the boy-king care was taken to guard the royal revenues and possessions during his minority; and for this purpose it was decreed that all alienations of lands or other property belonging to the late king, and made since his death, should be revoked unless they had been alienated by the consent of the three estates. It was also decreed, that until the new sovereign had attained his twenty-first year all future alienations of the same kind should be null and void, unless they had been granted by the same authority.

The administration of government during this period was a subject of vital import, and the persons by whom it was to be conducted could

not have been hastily chosen. But even here our early historians are apparently at fault when they briefly assert that the question was settled by parliament. According to these statements the chief power was intrusted to Sir William Crichton, who was raised to the office of chancellor, and Sir Alexander Livingston, who was appointed the young king's governor, while the queen, acting by their advice and that of a chosen council, presided as regent. Of these offices, indeed, we find the three in actual possession, while we can scarcely think that the influence of a Scottish parliament was as yet judged sufficient for such an important investiture. It is probable that they only recognized these appointments which the late king had decreed. During his latter days James I. had contemplated, and not without reason, the chance of his being suddenly taken off, and hence his solicitude in causing the three estates to swear fealty to the queen in the event of his sudden removal. This, it is probable, was but part of his care, which also extended to his son and the kingdom at large, and therefore the appointments of Crichton and Livingston may have formed a portion of the same royal will and testament. It is not otherwise easy to understand how two barons of inferior rank were allowed to step so quietly into offices which invested them with the chief power of the kingdom. But we can more easily comprehend how a people so proud and turbulent as the Scots, at a season of such uncertainty, could not long be coerced by the regency of a woman and an alien, and how little the high nobles would be disposed to give place to two barons whose power and lineage were so much beneath their own. Accordingly, before the year had ended we find the highest personage of the Scottish nobility at the head of government, with the office of lieutenant-general of the kingdom. This was Archibald, Earl of Douglas and Lord of Galloway and Annandale, Duke of Touraine and Count of Longueville in France, by whose authority the parliament was summoned, and who presided over its deliberations.¹

One of the first cares of the new government was to renew the truce with England which had been broken before the death of the late king. Accordingly a safe-conduct was obtained from Henry VI. for the ambassadors who were appointed to repair to England. But even at this early stage we perceive symptoms of discordance in the Scottish council from the fact that these ambassadors were set aside and new ones chosen.² Under their negotiation a truce of nine years

¹ *Acts of the Parliaments of Scotland*, vol. ii. p. 31.

² Rymer, x. 679, 688.

was established between the two kingdoms, which was to last from the first of May, 1438, to the first of May, 1447. At such a crisis more than at any other period peace was necessary for Scotland; but the facility with which it was obtained when England might have availed herself of the opportunity for war and conquest makes us wonder at such unwonted forbearance. But the state of English affairs gives an easy solution of the difficulty. The great Duke of Bedford was dead; the Duke of Burgundy, his powerful ally, had become neutral; and the English regents of France, who succeeded Bedford, were struggling with all the resources of their country to retain as much of the French conquests as still remained in their possession. In addition to these dispiriting reverses England was sorely afflicted with famine and pestilence. Well was it indeed for Scotland that, with a child for her king and factious nobles for her rulers, she could so fully profit by the calamities of her neighbours as to obtain the boon of non-interference.

Among the other enactments of the parliament held in 1438 it was decreed that the lord-lieutenant and the king's chosen council should hold two sessions annually for the administration of justice. It was also decreed that he should seize any rebels or "unruly men," whatever they might be, who sheltered themselves in castles and fortalices, and make them find security for their good behaviour. But from the records of this obscure period it appears that the very man who was appointed the guardian and executor of this law was its chief despiser and violator. Confident in the power and protection of their master, his retainers, especially the men of Annandale, wasted the country, plundered houses, and slew the occupants who resisted, as if they had been living at large in a hostile or conquered country; and when the earl was required to issue orders to his people to desist he not only refused, but commanded them to yield no submission to the prohibitions of the king's officers under pain of death. In this way he vindicated his feudal right to be sole judge in his own domains and over his own vassals, while he increased his power by rallying the lawless under the broad protection of his banner.¹

Against such a powerful offender as the Earl of Douglas nothing short of a complete union of the other ruling powers would have been available. But the regency of the queen appears to have ended with the execution of her husband's murderers, while Livingston and Crichton were engaged in such a heartless struggle with each other for the chief power and sole direc-

tion of affairs that each in turn countermanded the orders of the other and punished as the king's enemies all who obeyed them. In such a competition the possession of the young sovereign's person became a matter of utmost moment, and this Sir William Crichton contrived to secure in the strong castle of Edinburgh, which was under his control as chancellor, and where James had been placed for safety by the queen upon the death of his father. Secure in his advantage Crichton carefully kept the boy secluded from his friends and governed very ably in his name to the confusion of his rival, who by office was entitled to the keeping of the royal person, and was determined to vindicate his right. The queen, who favoured his views, made a friendly visit, accompanied by a small train, to the castle of Edinburgh, where she was received by Crichton with courteous welcome, and allowed to visit her son as often as she pleased. Availing herself of the opportunity she expressed her desire to make a pilgrimage to Whitekirk at Brechin, and sought permission to convey two large coffers from the castle, containing her apparel and ornaments, which was freely granted. The chests accordingly were carried through the gate; but one of them contained the young king, who, in this cunning manner, was conveyed to Leith, and transported to the castle of Stirling by water before his keepers in Edinburgh were aware of his absence.

Livingston having thus recovered his charge of governor to the young king by the escape of James, was resolved to improve the advantage; and accordingly he mustered his allies for the purpose of besieging the castle of Edinburgh, and reducing the chancellor to submission, the queen promising to supply provisions for his soldiers during the siege from her own granaries. These preparations alarmed Crichton, who was in no condition to resist them, and in this case he applied to the Earl of Douglas for aid, promising in return to become his ally and assist him against all his enemies. But the haughty earl was too powerful to need such help, and he returned a disdainful answer. It was little harm to him, he said, though such traitors as Crichton and Livingston should make war upon each other; and it became not the honourable estate of noblemen to assist them, though they should pursue each other to the death; adding that the country would be all the better of their mutual destruction. This answer opened the eyes of the chancellor to the danger that was most to be apprehended, and his perceptions were quickened by the formidable array of his rival, who had now commenced the siege, and was likely soon to be successful. He saw that whether himself

¹ *Pittscottie's Chronicles of Scotland*, vol. i. p. 3. Edin. 1814.

or Livingston prevailed, the victor was certain to be crushed in his turn by a still more powerful enemy; and that their only chance for mutual safety depended upon their union against the common foe. These considerations he urged upon Livingston in a parley which he demanded for the purpose, and to whom he revealed the earl's late answer. The result between two such able and unscrupulous self-seekers might be easily imagined: they closed their mailed hands in a mutual compact against the exorbitant power of the earl. Livingston and the young king, whom he had brought with him, were received into the castle of Edinburgh, which was freely rendered to them by Crichton; the chancellor and governor made a new and amicable arrangement of power and authority; and every movement among them had for its object the pulling down of the Earl of Douglas, against whom all their hatred and rivalry were now turned.

During these wild reactions consequent on the death of the late king, and amidst such contests of selfish unblushing ambition, "mickle hership and stouth was in land and boroughs, great cruelty of nobles among themselves; for slaughter, theft, and murder were then patent, and so continued day by day, so that he was esteemed the greatest man of renown that was the greatest brigand, thief, and murderer."¹ Of the desperate character of the feuds during this period the following instance is a specimen. In consequence of some family quarrel Sir Thomas Boyd of Kilmarnock treacherously assailed Sir Alan Stewart of Darnley at Polmaisthorne between Falkirk and Linlithgow, and slew him. This was enough to bequeath an inheritance of blood to Sir Alexander Stewart, the brother of the deceased, who mustered his military vassals and encountered Boyd near Neilston in Renfrewshire. From the number of combatants on either side it was like the meeting of two small armies; and the fight was so keenly contested that both parties repeatedly stepped back to take breath, and charge anew in greater fury, which they did to the sound of trumpets. At length the Boyds were defeated and driven off the field after many brave men had fallen.² In this way a single combat could produce a wholesale encounter, and one death be accompanied with many. This family feud was but a sample of the spirit that prevailed over the south-west of Scotland; and throughout Kyle, Carrick, Cunningham, and Renfrew, where the kindred and allies of the Boyds and Stewarts were most numerous, there were enough to adopt the

quarrel and pursue it in the same feudal spirit. While such contentions were rife Archibald, Earl of Douglas, their great patron and promoter, died at Restalrig in the neighbourhood of Edinburgh on the 26th of June, 1439. He was succeeded in his titles and possessions by his son William, a youth only sixteen years of age.

By the death of their great enemy and the minority of his son Livingston and Crichton were both freed from the chief obstacle to their ambition, as well as their motive for mutual co-operation. But as yet it was too early to resume their quarrel, for Joanna, the queen-mother, was already showing that she might become a formidable rival. In the deliverance of her son from the custody of Crichton she had ably served the cause of Livingston; but in return he had not only abridged her power, but circumscribed her liberty, so that she was little better than a prisoner under his custody. In such a condition it was natural that she should seek both liberty and a protector; and it may have been from such motives rather than any feeling of romantic love, that she selected for her second husband Sir James Stewart, commonly called the Black Knight of Lorn, the third son of John Stewart, the Lord of Lorn. An inferior Scottish baron was but a poor mate for a princess of the house of Beaufort, and an unmeet successor as husband to such a king as James I. But this was an age beyond others in which queens and princesses stooped to men of low degree. Thus Catherine, the Queen of France and England, and widow of the hero of Agincourt, had married Owen Tudor, a private Welsh gentleman; while her sister-in-law, Jaquetta of Luxemburg, the wife of the great Duke of Bedford, took for her second husband Sir Richard Woodville, who was merely an English knight. And yet neither of these noble dames could plead the excuse of their fair kinswoman, the widowed and oppressed queen of Scotland. The Black Knight of Lorn was allied with the Douglasses, and through him the queen might expect their powerful support and protection. He also appears to have very soon expressed his displeasure at the manner in which all power was engrossed by the chancellor and governor, and to have urged his claim for the guardianship of the young king through the right of his new relationship. But Livingston cut short these appeals by throwing the knight and his brother Sir William Stewart into a dungeon in Stirling Castle, which at that time was in his keeping. Nor did his violence stop short at this point; for, offended at the natural indignation of the queen and her complaints against this tyrannical proceeding, Livingston

¹ Pitscottie.

² *Auchinleck Chronicle*, p. 3; Pitscottie, p. 16; Balfour's *Annals of Scotland*, p. 168.

threw her into prison also. This odious deed appears to have been prefaced by unjustifiable violence; for at her apprehension the queen's chamber was invaded by armed men, and one of her attendants wounded in her defence.¹ Having proceeded thus far the bold and unscrupulous captor assembled at Stirling the prelates and nobles who adhered to his party (Sir William Crichton himself being one of the number), and three burgesses who were called to the sitting; and under this form, or rather mockery of a regular parliament of the three estates they proceeded to treat with the queen upon the terms of her liberation. By these she was obliged to surrender the guardianship of her son to Livingston; to commit to his keeping her castle of Stirling; to allow for the maintenance of the young king's household the annual allowance of four thousand merks which had been assigned her by parliament; to approve of Livingston's proceedings in her capture; and to hold no interviews with her son, except in the presence of unsuspected persons. Upon these terms, so degrading to a mother and a queen, she was freed from captivity.²

A fresh change was now to succeed in this extraordinary drama. With the queen reduced to submission and helplessness, the person of the sovereign in his keeping, and the strong castle of Stirling for his residence, Livingston for the time was the most powerful man in the kingdom. But Crichton, who had aided him against the queen as a common enemy, was in no mood to be overtopped by his rival, and he resolved to recover his consequence by obtaining possession of the royal person. He therefore watched for his opportunity, and learning that Livingston was for a short time absent on a journey, and that James was wont to take his pastime beyond the castle walls attended only by a small train, he mustered 4000 men, whom he stationed between Linlithgow and Stirling, the night being very dark, and pushed on at the head of 100 well-armed horsemen to the neighbourhood of the royal residence. On the morning James came out to hunt in the royal chase, as he had been wont, and fell into the ambush that was stationed to inclose him. No violence, however, was offered, and Crichton, bending his knee and laying a gentle hand on the bridle of the boy-sovereign, besought him to leave that prison and pass onward in his company to Edinburgh, where he would be a king indeed.

¹ Pitscottie, p. 18, 19. The violence with which this arrest was accompanied is proved by a charter of the lands of Philde, granted by James II. to Alexander Napier for the hurt he had received in her defence.

² *Acts of the Parliaments of Scotland*, v. ii. p. 54; Pitscottie, p. 19.
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As if the whole affair had been a Christmas mumming instead of a great state movement, James smilingly assented; and although his attendants drew their swords they were too few to resist, and were besides ordered by Alexander Livingston, the governor's eldest son and their captain, to desist from the attempt. Thus the king amicably rode off with the chancellor and was conducted in triumph to Edinburgh.

The tidings of this unexpected change brought Livingston in all haste to Stirling, and his chagrin at being so egregiously outwitted was embittered by his dread of the consequences. His first thoughts were of warlike reprisal, and for this purpose he would have allied himself with the Douglasses; but their new earl was too young to aid him and too fickle to be trusted. Obligated, therefore, to have recourse to policy and negotiation, the governor repaired in peaceful manner and with a small train to Edinburgh, where two prelates, equally the friends of himself and the chancellor, were desirous of bringing them to concord. These were William Leighton, Bishop of Aberdeen, and John Innes, Bishop of Moray, who laboured so successfully with the two angry rivals that they were persuaded to meet in the church of St. Giles, each accompanied by a few friends and without weapons. The terms of agreement were such as suited their own individual interests; for while the charge of the young king was restored to Livingston, Crichton was invested with additional privileges and his friends and supporters with profitable offices.

As if it had not been enough that the country should be troubled with the contentions of these two ambitious men, it was also scourged during this afflicting year (1439) with the visitations of famine and pestilence. In consequence of the public commotions men could neither sow nor reap in safety, and victuals became so scarce and so dear that wheat was sold at forty and oats at thirty shillings a boll, while many people died of hunger. As for the pestilence, which commenced at Dumfries, it was called the "pestilence without mercy," for none whom it attacked recovered, but died within the short space of twenty-four hours.³ The confusion into which government had lapsed through the selfishness of its rulers was also indicated by its natural fruits, so that when parliament was assembled for the restoration of order the complaints of oppression, injustice, and suffering that were poured into it were beyond all former precedent. The account

³ *Auchinleck Chronicle of the Reign of James the Second, King of Scots*, p. 4; Pitscottie, p. 23.

given by the old historian of this state of matters is both simple and affecting. "There were so many widows, bairns, and infants, seeking redress for their husbands, kin, and friends that were cruelly slain by wicked murderers, and in like manner many for hership, theft, and murder, that it would have pitied any man to have heard the same. Shortly, theft and murder were come into such dalliance amongst the people, and the king's acts came into such contempt, that no man knew where to seek refuge unless he had sworn himself to some common murderer or bloody tyrant to maintain him contrair the invasion of others, or else had given him largely of his gear to save his life and to give him peace and rest."¹ Parliamentary authority endeavoured to put a stop to this lawlessness, but the decrees it enacted for the purpose were nothing better than a confession of weakness and helplessness. It enacted that the great justiciaries on the southern and northern sides of the Forth should resume the old practice of holding their courts twice in the year; that the lords of regalities should do the same within their own jurisdictions; and the king's judges and officers in the districts that were subject to the crown. In like manner the former royal progresses for the administration of justice were to be repeated by the young sovereign; and upon the occurrence of any rebellion, slaughter, burning, robbery, outrage, or theft the king was immediately to ride to the spot and summon before him the sheriff of the district in which the wrong was committed and cause him to execute justice, in which the barons were to assist him with their persons, retainers, and property.² It is evident, however, that on such occasions the royal presence would be of little or no avail, as James was not of an age to judge and punish, and could only act according to the prompting of those who held his leading-strings. It is probable that nothing more was sought in thus parading him in open view than to impress the belief that he was no longer a prisoner or under the dictation of a single counsellor.

But these legislative formalities were not enough for the purposes of Crichton and Livingston, who, after having thrown all order loose by their dissensions, were now united because these disorders were equally dangerous to both. The chief source of all this misrule they attributed to the Douglasses and their too powerful head, and him therefore they resolved to suppress as the great national offender. Such appears to have been their ostensible motive by which they

secured the assent of parliament, but there were evidently still stronger and more selfish inducements to animate the two statesmen in such a perilous attempt. An enemy who was growing far more powerful than themselves would be removed, and thus the chief rule would remain in their own hands. Such base considerations were in full character with the deed of treachery that was to follow.

We have already noticed the early age at which William, the sixth Earl of Douglas, entered into his inheritance. He appears to have possessed in full measure the noble appearance, personal endowments, and superior courage that had distinguished his race since the days of the Good Lord James. The extent of his possessions greatly exceeded that of any Scottish noble, for besides the large districts in Galloway, Annandale, and other parts of Scotland that owned him for their chief, he was also Duke of Touraine and Count of Longueville in France. In his style of living, also, he combined the grandeur of a foreign prince with the substantial power of a Scottish noble, being generally attended in his journeys by a train of a thousand horse, and sometimes even with twice that number. Such wealth and power combined with his youth and inexperience easily made him the tool of the selfish and the ambitious; the lawless resorted to him for protection, and under his name or with his sanction a great portion of those crimes were committed of which the country had complained and which the parliament attempted to remedy. But a chief so powerful could not be reached by parliamentary citations, and he had shown his independence in truly regal style not only by holding parliaments of his own, but by prohibiting obedience to all edicts but those of his own parliaments.³ It fell to Crichton as chancellor and guardian of the law to punish such an offender, while the only means to effect such a purpose was to set both law and justice aside. But Crichton was not a man to scruple at such contradictions; his only aim was to allure the young earl within his reach; and for this purpose he sent him flattering messages deploring his absence and entreating him to come with his brother David to Edinburgh and assume the direction of public affairs, without which the whole kingdom was likely to go to wreck. The bait was cunningly selected; and fearless of danger, the earl, accompanied by his brother and a few friends and attended by a small train, repaired to Edinburgh, and was met on the way by the chancellor, who courteously invited the earl to partake of the hospitalities of his castle of Crichton. For two days the unsuspecting

¹ Pitscottie, p. 36.

² *Acts of Scottish Parliament*, vol. ii. pp. 32, 33.

³ Pitscottie, p. 17.

victim and his followers were sumptuously entertained; and Crichton, adding perjury to fraud, swore "by his great oath and holy sacrament" that he esteemed none so highly as Earl Douglas unless it were the king himself. The journey was resumed with cordial readiness; but as they neared Edinburgh the friends of Douglas could not help remarking the frequent interchange of messages between the chancellor who accompanied them and Livingston who was in the city, from which they suspected that mischief was contriving; and under this alarm they proposed to the earl either that they should immediately return home or at least that David Douglas should be sent thither, so that at the worst one of the family might be safe. But confident in the chancellor's honour and assurances, the earl indignantly silenced these proposals and did not draw bridle until he had reached the castle of Edinburgh. At the gate he was met by Livingston, who introduced him to the king; and between James, who was now only ten years of age, and the gallant young earl, who had but reached his eighteenth year, that rapid friendship seems to have commenced in which boyhood clings for protection to the manliness of more advanced youth, without feeling that the disparity is too great between them. Thus while welcome and banqueting reigned in the castle the headsman's axe was sharpening on the grindstone; and that there might be no chance of resistance or rescue, the earl's attendants were lodged under false pretexts apart from each other and beyond the town walls. All being in readiness a sumptuous feast was given, at which Livingston and Crichton presided; but the closing dish that was placed upon the table at the end of the banquet was a bull's head which was set before the earl—the grizzly token, according to ancient usage in Scotland, to intimate that the feast was to end in death.¹ Knowing too well what it meant, Douglas and his brother started to their feet and sought a place of safety or escape, but were speedily secured by a band of armed men who rushed in at a signal from Livingston. Terrified at the change, the young

king, who was present, wept when he saw the guards binding the wrists of the earl and his brother with cords, and besought Crichton with many tears to spare them; but the chancellor fiercely told him that the Douglasses were traitors and his worst enemies, and that the land would never be at peace until they were dead. After a hasty trial, of which the charges are not specified, but which, whether true or false, were necessary for this mock arraignment, Earl William and his brother David were hurried to the back court of the castle and there beheaded. With them was executed Sir Malcolm Fleming of Cumbernauld, who as the earl's chief friend and admirer was also involved in his fate.

By this judicial murder the power of the family of Douglas was abridged, as their French possessions, being male fiefs, reverted to the crown of France, while their unentailed estates in Galloway and Wigton and the baronies of Balvenie and Ormond became the property of Margaret, sister of Earl William, who on account of her beauty was called "The Fair Maid of Galloway." A temporary quiet in Scotland was also the result of the execution, as the earldom of Douglas, thus shorn of some of its best possessions, reverted to one who was little fitted for brawls and warlike achievements. This was James, uncle of the late earl, who on account of his corpulence was surnamed "The Gross," and to whom a soft easy bed was more congenial than the ground of the battle-field with a buckler for his pillow. But unfortunately for the country this gross Douglas slept his last after he had reposed under his new honours for two short years, while his son William, who succeeded to the title and inheritance, was possessed of all the family activity and enterprise as well as its towering ambition. And these qualities the new earl was not slow in exhibiting. James the Gross, who was by no means void of ambition, had planned the recovery of the alienated Scottish estates of the earldom by a marriage between his son William and the Fair Maid of Galloway; and such a tempting opportunity was not lost sight of when the young noble succeeded to the earldom. As the parties, being cousins, were within the prohibited degrees of relationship, a papal dispensation was necessary for the union of Earl William with the rich heiress, and for this he applied without delay; but his negotiation with the papal court was retarded by so many obstacles that at last he lost patience and resolved to take the affair into his own hands. Without awaiting, therefore, the arrival of the dispensation he espoused his cousin within three years after his father's death. Besides the illegality of such a marriage according to the ecclesiastical

¹ Although this part of the story relating to the bull's head, which rests upon the sole authority of Boece (as translated by Pitscottie), has been rejected by Pinkerton and his followers, it seems too much in keeping with the age, country, and deed to be so summarily discarded. It was a simple mode of announcing a purpose which the actor was too much ashamed to express in words. The simple account of the historian is as follows:—"Than the chancellor, after the coursie war takin away from the dinner, presented ane bullis head befor the earle Douglas, quhilk was ane signe and token of condemnatorie to the dead. But this earle and his brother, beholding the manifold treasone, with sad myndis and drearie countenances, start up from the boord and maid them to loup at any place they might gett out." Pitscottie, p. 42.

laws of the period the bride, on account of her extreme youth, must still have been a ward of the crown, and therefore amenable to the chancellor's authority, so that a union so dangerous to their interests might have been prevented by Crichton and Livingston. But they were either friendly or neutral to the proceeding, and the marriage, uncanonical in itself, was also consummated at an uncanonical season, being the time of Lent. In this daring step, at which the two rulers might well have trembled, the earl gave a distinct warning both of his unscrupulous purposes and his will and power to effect them.

While this treaty of the earl with the court of Rome was pending a matrimonial embassy arrived from Bretagne to propose a marriage between Francis, Count de Montfort, son and heir of John V., Duke of Bretagne, and the princess Isabella, daughter of James I. The proposal was favourably received by the Scottish court and their assent conveyed to Bretagne by Sir John Crichton, Admiral of Scotland, Foulis, Archdeacon of St. Andrews, and William Monnipenny, a diplomatist. An amusing anecdote connected with this courtship is related by Lobineau, the historian of the dukedom. On the return of his envoys from Scotland John V., who was surnamed the Good and Wise, was anxious to learn from them the qualities of his future daughter-in-law. They replied that she was beautiful, gracefully formed, and of a healthy constitution, but exceedingly taciturn, and this, too, apparently not from discretion but exceeding simplicity. "By Saint Nicholas!" cried the wise duke, "I think that a woman has discretion enough who knows the difference between her husband's shirt and his shirt-ruffle."

It was fortunate for Scotland during this season of intrigue and change that its connection with other countries was of a friendly and peaceful character. Besides the wisdom of such a course, which spoke well for the administration of Crichton and Livingston, it suited their interest to avoid a war by which their weakness would have been exposed and their authority set aside by whatever noble was strongest in the field. Accordingly the history of the country for two years may be summed up in a few general notices. As we have seen, the marriage treaty with Bretagne was concluded to the satisfaction of all parties. The truce with England which was to terminate in 1447 was by a fresh agreement extended to 1454. The friendly mercantile connections between Scotland and Flanders were continued to the advantage of both countries. But troubles were darkening over the land from the renewed dis-

sensions of the nobles, and especially from the increasing power of the Earl of Douglas, who was connected with most of the nobility either by relationship or alliance. So great was his influence that both Livingston and Crichton were obliged to succumb to it, while each courted his favour to procure the downfall of the other; and on the earl adopting the cause of the former the chancellor was obliged to take to flight and shelter himself within the castle of Edinburgh. There was reason for this alarm, for Douglas had cunningly ingratiated himself into the favour of the young sovereign and been appointed to the high office of lord-lieutenant of the kingdom. At this period, indeed (1444), his aggrandizement was so great as to make his influence irresistible. He had newly secured his long-delayed bride, and with her the extensive possessions that had formerly belonged to his earldom. His three brothers had shared in his rise and were also great and independent nobles. Of these Archibald, the eldest, by his marriage with Jane Dunbar succeeded to the title and estates of her father, the Earl of Moray, although her elder sister was married to the son of the chancellor; his second brother, Hugh, was created Earl of Ormond, and John, the third, Lord of Balvenie.¹

Against such an opponent neither Crichton nor Livingston could make head, and Douglas was not slow to improve his advantages. When it suited his purpose he could act with the one rival against the other, as he had lately done with Livingston against the chancellor; but he appears to have hated both as obstacles to his ambition, and in no change was he likely to forget the downfall of his cousins through the machinations of these unprincipled statesmen. The king, also, who had been alternately their prisoner and their puppet, was ready to lend the sanction of his name to their condemnation and overthrow. It was easy accordingly for Douglas to procure a decree from parliament by which their estates were confiscated, and themselves declared rebels. But though both Crichton and Livingston had yielded to the storm and laid down their offices of chancellor and king's governor, they still kept possession of the royal castles of Edinburgh and Stirling, and each proceeded to fortify himself against king, lord-lieutenant, and parliament alike. These were sufficient signals for a civil war, and the storm fell upon the chancellor, whose castle of Crichton was assailed by the royal forces commanded by the lord-lieutenant and destroyed. To requite this injury the chancellor made a terrible inroad from the castle of Edinburgh upon the lands of

¹ Balfour's *Annals of Scotland*, vol. i. pp. 172, 173.

Corstorphine, which belonged to Douglas and his adherents, and wasted them with fire and sword. The war thus kindled spread over into Fife and Angus, where the Earl of Crawford mercilessly ravaged the lands of James Kennedy, Bishop of St. Andrews, because the latter had allied himself with Crichton to check the power of the Douglasses; and upon this the bishop had recourse to the weapons of the church, and solemnly excommunicated Crawford, who cared little for the sentence.¹ The Earl of Douglas now laid siege to the castle of Edinburgh; but it was so bravely and successfully held out by the chancellor, that for nine weeks he kept the royal army at bay, and only surrendered at last upon favourable terms, which consisted of complete indemnity for himself and adherents, and the retention of a large part of his former influence.

Mention has been briefly made amidst these contests of the Earl of Crawford, a firm ally of Douglas, and reckless despiser of churchmen and church censures; but his end, which followed speedily after, is a sufficient comment upon these reckless quarrels, as well as characteristic of their motives and chief actors. The office of justiciary of the monastery and lands of Arbroath had been conferred upon Alexander Lindsay, the eldest son of this earl, and afterwards his successor, long famed in Fifeshire under the name of "Earl Beardy," from the length and shagginess of his beard, and the "Tiger," from his fearless courage and cruelty. Such a protector and dispenser of justice could scarcely be the fittest for church vassals and reverend monks, and accordingly the brotherhood superseded him by electing Alexander Ogilvie of Inverquhar in his room. If this bearded baron had joined his father in the inroad upon the church lands of St. Andrews, as was not unlikely, we can easily perceive a sufficient cause for his deposition. Although the charge itself was but "a mean bailiery," while Ogilvie was a special friend and ally of the Earl of Crawford, these considerations went for nothing with the Tiger, or only aggravated his rage; and, mustering a powerful array of wild Lindsays, Hamiltons, and Douglasses, he advanced upon Arbroath to recover his office by force of arms. His rival, nothing loath, came out to meet him at the head of his kinsmen, allies, and supporters, among whom was the Earl of Huntly, who chanced to be his visitor at the time, and who joined him either from having partaken of his bread and salt or from the mere love of danger and adventure. The two bands arrayed in such a paltry quarrel were not only considerable

in the number of combatants, but mustered knights and barons enough for a battle with a national question at stake. Banners and pennons were unfurled, lances were laid in the rest, and all was ready for the close and shock of encounter, when the Earl of Crawford suddenly spurred into the field and threw himself into the open space between the two parties. He had heard in Dundee of this purpose of wild encounter that would be fatal to his interests let the victory rest where it might, and was therefore earnest in his new office of peacemaker; but while he interposed to that effect a common soldier, who was ignorant of his rank and impatient at the interruption, slew him with the thrust of a spear. And thus died the earl in a good action, as the old historian is careful to note, "albeit he was very insolent all the rest of his lifetime." Infuriated by this event the Lindsays and their allies made such a headlong onset upon the Ogilvies, that the latter were obliged to give back, and notwithstanding a long and stubborn resistance finally to take to flight. The result of this conflict was as fatal as the cause was frivolous; the Earl of Huntly received a wound that afterwards proved mortal; his host, Ogilvie of Inverquhar, was slain; five other barons, several gentlemen of name and lineage, and about five hundred of their followers were left dead on the field.²

It was during the same year (1445), and amidst events in which all order was confounded and the life of every man committed to the hazard of each passing hour, that the queen-mother died. Unhappy, indeed, was the fate of the high-born and beautiful Joanna Beaufort, the inspiring theme of the noblest of minstrels, the wife of one of the best and most accomplished of sovereigns. After the death of her royal husband her power had only lasted long enough to revenge his murder; and this being accomplished she ceased to be a queen, and was only regarded as a defenceless woman, a stranger, and one of a hostile race and nation, for whom no one cared, and whom every faction in turn might insult at pleasure. It was not wonderful if in such a state she sought the only protector to whom a woman should cling, and could find no one of higher mark than a private baron who cared to undertake a responsibility at once so unprofitable and so dangerous. We have already seen how helpless her second husband was to protect her against the power of the Livingstons, and with what difficulty they procured their deliverance from the prison into which the governor had thrown them. After this the unfortunate pair seem to have sunk into a safe

¹ *Auchinleck Chronicle*, p. 8.

² *Pitscottie*, pp. 53-55.

obscurity, as no notice occurs of them till the present period, when the Black Knight of Lorn ventured to express his indignation at the condition of the government and the tyranny of the Earl of Douglas. For this bold offence he was sentenced to banishment, upon which he embarked for France; but on the voyage he was captured by Flemish pirates and carried to Flanders, where he died either through grief or hard usage. After his departure from Scotland the queen appears to have taken refuge in the castle of Dunbar, which had been forcibly seized and occupied by a strong Border plunderer and outlaw, Patrick Hepburn of Hailes, the fitting ancestor of the notorious Earl of Bothwell, the husband of Mary Stuart; and under this precarious protection Joanna received the tidings of the captivity and death of the Knight of Lorn, soon after which she herself died, and was buried in the royal tomb of her first husband in the monastery of Carthusians at Perth.¹

The loss of such an ally as the Earl of Crawford might have been fatal to the influence of the Earl of Douglas had not the Tiger succeeded to his father's political engagements as well as his titles and estates, and on this account he entered into a closer league with the lord-lieutenant than even his father seems to have done. In this compact was also included Alexander, Lord of the Isles and Earl of Ross, who could not forget the imprisonment and humiliation he had endured under the late king. Thus the three greatest nobles of the kingdom were banded for the support of each other in all their enterprises and against all their enemies, without even excepting the king—a proviso usually inserted in such dangerous agreements, however it might be substantially disregarded; while the Livingstons, who had tried to make head against the Douglasses, were glad to join an association which they were too feeble to resist. To oppose this formidable union no party remained but that of Sir William Crichton, now restored to the chancellorship and raised to the dignity of a lord in parliament, and his patriotic ally, Kennedy, Bishop of St. Andrews. But it was greatly strengthened by the favour of James II. himself, now a youth of seventeen years of age, and whom a rough training amidst these civil broils had inspired with manly prudence and resolution. So formidable was this union that Douglas did not dare to attack it; but still bent upon feudal revenge, he resolved to turn his arms against the Livingstons, the enemies of his house, and whom he seems never to have

forgiven, notwithstanding the alliances he had formed with them against the chancellor. Availing himself of his authority as lord-lieutenant he caused Sir Alexander Livingston, now Lord Callander, who had been the king's governor, Alexander Livingston his eldest son, Sir James Dundas of Dundas, and Sir Robert Bruce of Clackmannan to be committed to ward. The particulars of the trial and the nature of the charge brought against them have not been mentioned; but the severity with which they were treated affords sufficient proof that vengeance rather than justice was the motive of their adversaries. The Lord of Callander, now an old man, retired from the strife of politics, and his adherents, Dundas and Bruce, were deprived of their estates; but instead of being set free after this heavy infliction, they were imprisoned in the castle of Dumbarton. A still worse fate attended other members of the family, of whom Alexander Livingston the younger and two others were beheaded. The complicity of the king in these severe measures it is impossible now to discover; but the fact of his having previously been in seeming concord with the Livingstons makes it probable that he willingly assented to their fate. He had thus fewer enemies left to encounter; and he could not be supposed to entertain grateful recollections of a family in whose hands both his mother and himself had been prisoners. The fate of Alexander, the governor's son, was especially lamented by the people. It was he who, when James was apprehended at Stirling by the chancellor, humanely interposed and prevented his attendants from a resistance that would only have provoked their fate. He is described as one accomplished beyond his age and country; but these endowments were only the more likely to exasperate his persecutors and ensure his condemnation; and in his dying speech upon the scaffold, while warning the bystanders against ambition and the deceitful allurements of court favour, he heavily complained of the iniquity of his trial, in which a jury of his sworn enemies had been packed against him to condemn him to the death of a traitor.²

Before this utter suppression of the Livingstons the propriety of selecting a bride for their young sovereign had occupied the attention of the Scottish councillors. Accordingly, in 1448, James commissioned the chancellor Crichton, who had now secured his confidence, Railston, Bishop of Dunkeld, and Nicholas de Otterburn, official of Lothian, to repair to France and select for him a partner among the princesses of the royal family. They were also empowered to renew the league which had so long subsisted

¹ Balfour's *Annals of Scotland*, vol. i. pp. 174, 175; Pit-scottie, p. 58; *Auchinleck Chronicle*, pp. 6, 7.

² Pit-scottie; Balfour's *Annals*.

between the kingdoms of Scotland and France. The last part of their commission was easily accomplished; but as the family of the French king had at present no princess fit to be a bride for their sovereign, the Scottish ambassadors next repaired to the court of the wealthy and powerful Duke of Gueldres, whose daughter Mary, his only child and heiress, was considered an eligible mate for the King of Scotland. The proposals of the Scottish envoys to that effect were favourably received, and on the year following the princess was affianced in due form as the bride of the King of Scotland.

This peaceful movement did not, however, escape the notice of two parties whose interests were equally involved in the event. The accession of wealth and power which James would derive from this union would be fatal to the ambition of the Douglasses, while the close alliance between France and Scotland, of which it was the pledge, would disappoint the hopes of that numerous party in England who still looked forward to the recovery of their French conquests. To destroy, or even to retard, this matrimonial alliance would benefit the views of both, and the object could be best accomplished by breaking the long peace that had subsisted between the two countries, and plunging England and Scotland into all the confusion and uncertainty of war. The war commenced on the side of England and by a Border incursion, in which the Earls of Northumberland and Salisbury at the head of two separate bodies crossed the marches at the eastern and western boundaries, and gave the towns of Dumfries and Dunbar to the flames. This inroad was retaliated by Douglas of Balvenie, brother of the earl, who made a wasteful irruption into Cumberland and burned the town of Alnwick.

These were but preludes to more decisive operations, and bent upon revenge an English army of six thousand soldiers commanded by the younger Percy, Sir John Pennington, and Sir John Harrington crossed the Solway and encamped on the banks of the river Sark. But their most distinguished champion, and the leader in whom they most trusted, was Sir Magnus Redmain, or Magnus with the red mane, so called, we are told, in derision by the Scots from the colour of his bushy beard. He had won high renown in the wars of France, and such was his hatred of the Scots, or confidence in his own prowess, that he sought no other reward for his services than as much of Scottish ground as he was able to conquer. To meet the invaders Hugh, Earl of Ormond, brother of the Earl of Douglas, accompanied by Sir John Wallace of Craigie, the Laird of Johnston, and other westland barons, and four thou-

sand men advanced to the Sark. The battle was commenced by the English archery, whose terrible volleys would soon have decided the contest had it not been for the gallantry and prudence of Wallace of Craigie, who showed himself worthy of his illustrious name. He turned his countrymen when they were upon the point of flight, exhorting them to close upon the enemy, by which their missiles would be useless; and he seconded his words by leading them forward to a fierce and unexpected onset. The English reeled and gave way before the charge, and Magnus himself fell in a vain attempt to rally them; Percy, Pennington, and Harrington were taken prisoners; and so total was the rout of their followers that fifteen hundred were left dead on the field, and five hundred were drowned in the river. The Scots lost only twenty-six men, among whom was no one of note except the gallant Wallace, by whom the victory was chiefly won, and who received a wound that proved mortal owing to the unskilful treatment of the surgeons.¹

It had not been the wont of England to sit quietly under such a discomfiture, and preparations were in progress to retrieve the national reputation by an invasion of Scotland upon a larger scale. But even already those dissensions had commenced which were afterwards to be so famous in English history under the name of the wars of the Roses, and from which not a soldier could be spared. Such a cessation was most beneficial to Scotland, where war could have only increased the power of the Douglasses; and welcome to James, whom it left free to consummate the marriage which had been contracted on the previous year. All being therefore arranged, and in readiness for the event, the youthful and beautiful Mary of Gueldres arrived in Scotland on the 18th of June, 1449. Her train, which was conveyed to the shores of the Forth in thirteen ships, besides many ladies of rank, consisted of three hundred guards completely armed from head to foot in steel and mounted on barbed horses; and she was accompanied by the Archduke of Austria, the Duke of Brittany, and the Lord of Campvere, all of them brothers-in-law of James, who were attended by knights and barons, the flower of French and Burgundian chivalry. Such a gorgeous array had never before landed upon the barren shores of Scotland. But with whatever admiration the Scottish crowds may have gazed upon the strangers as they landed at Leith and commenced their procession to Edinburgh, the feeling was by no means mutual,

¹ Pitscottie, p. 75; Balfour's *Annals*, i. 177; *Auchinleck Chronicle*, pp. 18, 19.

as the lords of France and Burgundy accounted the natives little better than barbarians. Mary rode from Leith to the Scottish capital seated behind the Lord of Campvere, and on the following week her nuptials and coronation followed. The marriage contract was liberal in its provisions on either side. Philip the Good, Duke of Burgundy and uncle of the bride, engaged to pay for her portion in the course of two years the sum of sixty thousand crowns in gold; while James, in the event of his decease, settled upon her as his widow a dowry of ten thousand crowns secured upon lands in Strathern, Athole, Methven, and Linlithgow. He also renounced all claim to the dukedom of Gueldres through his queen if her father should leave a male heir. Another important alliance resulting from this marriage was a commercial treaty, by which the amicable commercial relations between Scotland and the Duke of Burgundy's territories, comprising Brabant, Flanders, Holland, Zealand, and other continental districts, were to be leagued for their mutual defence and benefit.¹

Amidst the masques, feasts, and pageants, the revelry and merry-making with which this joyful marriage was inaugurated, it would have been incredible if the joys of the tournament had been omitted; and accordingly a passage of arms took place, to the delight of all parties. Among the foreign knights were three redoubted champions, Jacques de Lalain, Simon de Lalain, his uncle, and Sieur de Meriadet, Lord of Longueville, who had been impatient to make proof of Scottish valour and had crossed the seas for that purpose. They were little likely to be balked in their wish, for James Douglas, brother of the earl, another James Douglas of the same family, and Sir John Ross of Halket, welcomed in all love the courteous invitation of the gallant foreigners. To enhance its value it was also to be a combat at outrance instead of a play of harmless skill with headless lances and blunted swords. The lists were inclosed on an open level space under the castle-rock at Stirling; the galleries which were erected on either side were filled with the king and his noble visitors, the courtiers, and above all with high-born ladies, whose approving smiles were the sunshine and animating soul of chivalry; while behind them were the commons in thousands eager to witness good blows and alive to the military honour of their countrymen. The presence of the Earl of Douglas could not be wanting where the warlike renown of his own house was so much at stake; but as if to outshine his sovereign and impress the foreigners

with a full sense of his superiority, he came to the tournament attended by a train, or rather army, of 5000 followers. The combat was to be waged with axes, lances, swords, and daggers; and before it commenced Jacques de Lalain, the principal challenger, addressing his two companions, besought them not to interpose between him and his antagonist or bring him aid whatever might befall, for thereby they would disgrace his renown as being unable to sustain the encounter of a single knight. The trumpets sounded to onset, the combatants closed in pairs, and such was the fury of their blows that of the Scottish weapons none remained unbroken save a dagger of one of the Douglasses. At length after a desperate conflict of equal fortune, in which vizors were crashed and corslets rent asunder, one of the Scottish knights was repeatedly felled to the earth by a Burgundian battle-axe; and the conflict being thus reduced to an inequality of three against two, the king flung down his warder and the combat was stayed.²

The power of the Earl of Douglas had now become intolerable, while his office of lord-lieutenant gave a sanction to his tyrannous proceedings. But the precocious mind of James was already competent for the cares of royalty, and he showed his wisdom by availing himself of the prudence, skill, and experience of Crichton and the Bishop of St. Andrews. Soon after his marriage he deprived the earl of his lord-lieutenancy as an office no longer needed, upon which the latter retired to his castle to brood over the injury and meditate further schemes of ambition. An opportunity quickly occurred to him of showing that his power was little diminished by the change, and that he was not to be offended with impunity. Sir William Colville having sustained many injuries at the hands of James Auchinleck, a friend of the earl, thought that his season of revenge had arrived; and therefore without troubling himself by demands of redress, which had been often made to no purpose, he attacked Auchinleck and killed him with several of his friends. Indignant at this and feeling it as a personal insult, the Earl of Douglas solemnly swore that he would never rest till he had revenged the deed. He accordingly gathered a large body of his retainers and laid regular siege to the castle of Sir William Colville, which he took, and put Sir William himself and all its inhabitants to the sword. "There were many of the country," adds Pit-scottie, "that commended the Earl Douglas his enterprise for revenging of his friend's quarrel.

¹ Harleian MSS. 4637; *Auchinleck Chronicle*, p. 41.

² *Auchinleck Chronicle*, p. 40; De Coucy's *Continuation of Charter*, p. 567; *Fol. Paris*, 1661.

If he had been as diligent in punishing of murderers and thieves that oppressed the poor commons! But many hoped that this tyranny should some time have an end that vexed them at all times so cruelly."

The earl now resolved to leave Scotland for a time and visit foreign countries, and for such a journey he had sufficient motives. Powerful though he was, the party that had now rallied around the young king was too strong to be overthrown. The general hatred with which he was regarded, and by which the number of his enemies would be daily increased, might be abated by his absence. His vanity would be gratified by parading his grandeur in England, France, and Italy, instead of the limited field of Scotland, where admiration had been succeeded by envy and disgust. He might also hope to renew his power and political influence through the civil contentions of England, or by winning back from the French king the duchy of Touraine, which being a male fief had reverted to the crown of France on his accession to the earldom. Leaving, therefore, his brother, John Douglas, Lord of Balvenie, in charge of his estates and offices during his absence, the earl took his departure for Flanders accompanied by a train of nobles, knights, and gentlemen with their attendants, and an armed retinue of eighty horse; and wherever he came he assumed the style and bearing of a king. From Flanders he proceeded to Paris, where he was joined by his brother, James Douglas, at that time studying at the university with the view of becoming Bishop of Dunkeld, but to whom the hope of succeeding to the earldom was already opening, as the earl himself was still without an heir. From the court of Paris, where he had been treated with high distinction, the earl went to Rome. It was the season of jubilee, when the "Eternal City" was crowded with the choicest of the polished communities of Europe; and while both natives and strangers received this mighty lord of a remote land with hospitality and welcome, they must have marvelled not a little at the hyperborean style with which his consequence was manifested. But while the earl was thus squandering his hoarded Scottish rents and hard-wrung presents for countenance and protection among a people to whom he must have been little more than a jubilee show, his affairs at home were becoming more deeply involved through the mismanagement of his brother, Lord Balvenie, who had a spirit as haughty and turbulent as his own. On his tyrannous conduct being complained of to the king he was cited to appear and answer in person to the complaints brought against him; but, aware of his stubbornness, the sum-

mons was backed by an armed force which the proud lord could not resist. He therefore put himself into the king's will, and was dismissed unpunished after a strict exhortation to restore to every man his own. No sooner, however, had he returned home than he resumed his former courses, upon which the king raised an army and advanced into Galloway to punish the strong rebel and vindicate the broken laws. The process, as might be expected, was both sharp and direct. At the king's coming the adherents of the Douglasses fled to their peels and fortalices, but these were besieged in regular form and successfully captured by detachments from the royal army. In this way the castle of Lochmaben was speedily reduced to surrender; the castle of Douglas itself, the centre of rebellion, was razed to the ground; and from the fines imposed and plunder recovered from the rebels James caused full restitution to be made to every claimant whom they had wronged and bereaved.¹

Tidings of these events reached the Earl of Douglas at Rome and compelled him to a hasty return, but with wofully diminished splendour; for the lords and knights who accompanied him dispersed and came to Scotland by various routes through France and Flanders. As for the earl, he procured a safe-conduct to pass through England; and on approaching the Scottish border he sent a humble message to the king requesting permission to pass to his home, which was freely allowed on condition that the earl should maintain order and punish malefactors in his troubled district of Annandale. Douglas was abundant in his promises, and was believed, so that soon after (April, 1451) he received a commission from his sovereign with other Scottish ambassadors to treat with the English council about the continuation of peace between both countries. But he soon showed himself most unworthy of this confidence, for instead of accompanying the embassy he remained at home strengthening his own party for a fresh rebellion against his sovereign, and secretly intriguing with the Yorkists of England for the same purpose. On the following month he resolved to make a journey to England, and, to conceal his designs, pretended that he would afterwards pass to the Continent; and having obtained a safe-conduct from the English court for himself, his three brothers, twenty-six gentlemen, and sixty-seven attendants, he selected for his escort the chief persons who were afterwards concerned in the open revolt. These equivocal proceedings awoke the royal suspicions; but as the earl was aware of this, and as

¹ Balfour's *Annals*; Pitscottie.

his plans were not yet matured, he repaired to the king's presence, humbly besought forgiveness for all past offences, and renewed his promises that he would be a leal obedient subject in all time to come. The queen and nobles joined their intercessions with his; and as there was nothing more than suspicion against the offender he was dismissed unpunished; but to make sure of his fidelity by depriving him of the power to rebel he was stripped of those high offices which he still retained, and which were transferred to the Earl of Orkney and Sir William Crichton. Enraged at this bereavement and at the share held in it by his old enemy, Crichton, Douglas now abandoned all show of restraint and was eager for revenge, which he resolved should first alight upon the chancellor. Having learned, accordingly, of a day in which Crichton had resolved to travel to Edinburgh, he planted an ambush on the road to intercept and kill him. But the old man, thus unexpectedly attacked, defended himself with spirit; and being ably seconded by his son and attendants, he cut his way through the assassins and escaped into his castle of Crichton. Not content with this, he speedily mustered his adherents and returned to Edinburgh, where he attacked Douglas, who was unprepared for such an unexpected meeting, and chased him from the city.¹

Like a baffled lion retiring to its den the defeated earl betook himself to his territory of Annandale, and there his rage sought and found a vent in the infliction of fresh oppressions upon the faithful servants of the king. Among these was Sir John Herries of Terregles, upon whose lands he let loose his retainers, where they plundered at pleasure, and when Herries remonstrated and demanded redress his appeals were only answered with refusal or contempt. Being a man of high spirit he resolved to right himself by force, and mustered his vassals for the purpose; but it was soon shown that his resistance was unavailing against the far superior power of his lawless neighbour. In his attempt to obtain redress by arms he was overpowered, taken prisoner, and dragged before the earl, who threw him in irons; and when the king sent messengers commanding Douglas to stay his proceedings the earl showed his contempt of the royal mandate by causing the nobly-descended Sir John Herries to be hanged as a common thief.²

This deed of violence, which occurred towards the close of this year (1451), was followed by another still more insolent and atrocious. Having

renewed his league with the Earls of Crawford and Ross, the power of Douglas over the south of Scotland was that of an absolute king; and at his command the barons and gentlemen of Galloway, with those of Kyle, Carrick, and Cunningham, were obliged to unite with him and do implicit service under his banner, whether for the king or against him. There was one hardy recusant, however, who refused such abject vassalage; this was Maclellan, the tutor or guardian of the heir and lands of Bomby, who regarded this compact in its true light as a conspiracy against the king. Incensed at this bold refusal, Douglas at the head of an armed force assailed and stormed Maclellan's house and carried him off a prisoner to his castle. The news of this capture was quickly conveyed to the court, where Sir Patrick Grey was captain of the king's guard; and Grey, who was nephew of the prisoner, and had cause to tremble for his safety under such keeping, laid the case before the king. James, who was interested in the fate of such a faithful servant as the tutor of Bomby, and aware of the savage imperious spirit of the earl, wrote to him "a sweet letter of supplication" beseeching him to deliver his prisoner into the keeping of Sir Patrick Grey, his kinsman. Thus furnished with credentials, Grey lost not a moment in repairing to Douglas Castle, which he reached at the hour of dinner; and the earl, who wondered what this coming could mean, ordered the boards to be drawn and the banquet laid, while he welcomed the royal messenger with graceful but hollow welcome. He asked Sir Patrick if he had dined; and on the latter replying that he had not, the earl said with apparent frankness, "There is no talk to be had betwixt a full man and a fasting; therefore you shall dine, and we shall talk together at length." The conversation at the meal was varied and cheerful, and from the demeanour of the earl Sir Patrick argued a fortunate end of his errand. But Douglas the while had been trying to guess its import, and had arrived at the surmise that it concerned the liberation of his prisoner. Under this suspicion he gave secret orders to conduct Maclellan from his dungeon to the green before the castle; there to strike off his head and remove it, and cover up the body with a cloth—which was done accordingly while the jest and the wine-cup were joyfully passing within the hall. Impatient for business, Sir Patrick as soon as the dinner was over delivered his letter, which the earl received and read with an appearance of satisfaction; and he expressed his gratitude that the king, after all that had passed, should have written to him so gracious a missive and sent it by such a messenger. He took Sir

¹ Pitscottie, 90-94.

² Balfour's *Annals*, i. 180; Pitscottie, p. 95.

Patrick's hand, led him to the green, and the cloth being removed from the body, he added with savage pleasantry, "Sir Patrick, you are come a little too late; yonder is your sister's son lying, but he wants the head; take his body and do with it what you will." Had Grey turned and stabbed the insulter to the heart it would have been thought at the time a just and natural return; but he was not only in the lion's den, but powerless at the spectacle. At length, smothering his indignation, he replied in choking accents, "My lord, if you have taken from him his head, dispose of the body as you please;" and with that he called to horse. As

soon as he mounted to be gone his wrath could be restrained no longer; "My lord," he loudly exclaimed, "an' I live you shall be rewarded for your labours that you have used at this time according to your demerits!" and so saying he plied his spurs and cleared barbican and draw-bridge, while the savage earl was shouting to his attendants to mount and give chase. It was well for the knight that he had a good led horse besides that which carried him, for so hot was the pursuit and so long that it only drew up within a short distance of Edinburgh, having been continued for nearly sixty miles.

CHAPTER IV.

REIGN OF JAMES II. (1451-1460).

Difficulty of bringing the Earl of Douglas to justice—His power and alliances—Resolution of the king and his ministers to treat with him in person—The earl invited to Stirling—His friendly reception from the king—James requests the earl to break his bond with Crawford and Ross—The earl's insolent refusal—James suddenly stabs him with his dagger—The by-standers second the deed—Palliatives of this rash and iniquitous act—Fury of the Douglasses at the assassination of their lord—They break out into open insurrection—The king's army defeats the Earl of Crawford at Brechin—The earl's strange conduct after his defeat—Negotiations of the Douglasses with the Yorkists—Proceedings of parliament against James, the new Earl of Douglas, and his family—Their protest against its decrees and renunciation of their allegiance—The king rewards his faithful adherents—He raises an army for the suppression of the rebels—The Earl of Douglas submits—Humbling terms of his submission—He is restored to his place and possessions—He seeks the widow of his brother in marriage—He obtains the control of her baronies and estates—He continues his intrigues with the Yorkists in London—Submission of the Earl of Crawford to the king—His strange mode of appeal—He is forgiven and received to favour—The University of Glasgow founded—Death of Crichton—His character—Earl Douglas continues his English intrigues—War between him and the king renewed—The earl's castle of Abercorn besieged and taken by the king—Events of the siege—Douglas in vain attempts to raise it—He is defeated at Arkinholm—He flies for aid to the Earl of Ross—Invasion from the Isles upon Scotland—Its insignificant character and fruitless results—The Earl of Douglas retires into England—Insolent letter of the Duke of York to the Scottish king—The Countesses of Douglas and Ross take refuge with James—Their gracious reception—Hostile proceedings on the Borders—The Earls Douglas and Percy invade Scotland—They are defeated by the Earl of Angus—Angus becomes the head of the Douglas family—The Earl of Ross offers submission to the king—Politick conduct of James on the occasion—Conditions on which James consents to pardon the earl—Hopeful prospects of the kingdom—Uncertain nature of James's connection with England—His supposed private agreement with Henry VI.—He invades England in behalf of Henry—He is persuaded to retire into Scotland—The English invade Scotland in return—Their army disperses at the Border—James renews the war—He crosses the Border and besieges Roxburgh—His accidental death by the bursting of a cannon—His character—Arrival of the queen to the camp—She encourages the soldiers to renew the siege—The castle of Roxburgh taken and destroyed.

After these outrages of the Earl of Douglas, by which he had not only violated the laws, but insulted and defied his sovereign, James and his council were driven to despair. How to bring the bold offender to trial, or even to reduce him to moderation, was now the question at issue, but which no one seemed able to solve. The rough but short and simple process of a civil war, in which the earl should be proclaimed a rebel and a traitor, and crushed by a royal army,

would have instantly been adopted, but for the precariousness of the remedy; for the rebel was already more powerful than the king, and in a trial of arms Douglas, through his alliance with the Earls of Crawford and Ross, would be able to bring a larger array into the field than any that the king could muster. The close compact by which these nobles had bound themselves together against all and sundry, and of all of them to maintain the quarrel of each whether

for evil or for good, was well known to the anxious sovereign and his advisers; and unless this could be dissolved Douglas was unassailable, and might continue to defy them with impunity.

To break up this alliance was the first resolution of the secret council, and to accomplish this object not by force but cautious management and cunning. They would begin their attempt also by detaching Douglas from his allies, as the person most to be dreaded, instead of commencing with his supporters. That they might be able to dictate their terms more effectually it was necessary to bring the earl to their presence, instead of treating with him in his own dominions and in the midst of his royal power and grandeur. The king therefore wrote to him a gentle letter, promising to forget all his past trespasses and requesting him only to be a true subject for the time to come, and inviting him to come to the council, where he should receive a full pardon for the past and a proper share in the administration of the government. By such a proceeding Earl William and his brother had been allured to Edinburgh only eleven years before; and in this repetition of the stratagem we can recognize the guiding hand of Crichton, by whom the first had been contrived. It is possible that on this occasion, also, the king and his adherents had resolved, as soon as they had the earl within their power, to reduce him to terms, or failing in this, to bring him to a formal trial, and that this purpose was only frustrated by the sudden transport of James, upon which neither himself nor his friends could have calculated. Unwarned by the fate of his predecessor the proud and fearless earl was as ready to confront the council as his worst enemies could have wished, and only desired the royal seal to be appended to the letter of safe-conduct and invitation.¹ This was done, and it has also been stated that some of the nobles accompanied it with a written obligation subscribed with their names, in which they warranted his safety and engaged themselves to compel the king to respect it even though he should be inclined to violate his promise.²

Assured by these pledges that no harm was intended Douglas, accompanied by their bearer, Sir William Lauder of Hutton, and having only a few followers in his train, rode to Stirling, the place of royal residence, on the 21st of February, 1452. On the same day he had an interview with the king, who received him courteously and invited him to dine and sup with him on the morrow. All went on harmoniously at the banquet-table in the castle, where Douglas was treated as an honoured guest; and after supper,

which was at seven in the evening, the king withdrew the earl into a private chamber to have some conversation with him apart, none being present there but certain members of his council and the captain of the guards. James commenced the important interview with grave and gentle remonstrances. He neither knew nor believed, he said, any evil of the earl; and he besought him to remove any ground of suspicion, by which his subjects might think that there was disagreement and strife between them. The chief of these suspicious symptoms was the bond of alliance which he had formed with Ross and Crawford; and this he besought him to break if he valued the peace of the realm and his own character as a true and loyal subject. This was too much for the haughty Douglas; and after a storm of abuse against the royal councillors, in which the king himself was not spared, he declared that with regard to breaking the bond he might not, and he would not. James, who had hitherto restrained his naturally fiery temper and condescended to the language of entreaty, now burst into a paroxysm of fury that swept away all gentler thoughts in an instant: in the blind impulse of the moment he drew his dagger, and exclaiming, "False traitor! since you will not break the bond, I shall," he plunged the weapon first into his throat, and instantly after into the lower part of his body. Sir Patrick Grey, the captain of the guard, who had a recent debt of vengeance to pay, felled the earl to the ground with his pole-axe. Eager to signalize their hatred or their loyalty, the rest who were present plunged their weapons into the dead body and mangled it with twenty-six wounds, after which they threw it out at the window into the open court below.³

In this lawless manner was a powerful subject despatched who had violated every law, and whom the laws could not reach: the man who had scorned the sacred pledges of hospitality as in the case of the tutor of Bomby, was himself despatched by those who had pledged themselves for his safety and entertained him at their board. It was a deed by which the perpetrators placed themselves upon the same level with him whom they had punished, and the consequences of which they were now to answer as they best might. If any apology can be offered it is only to be found in the fact that the earl deserved to die, and that no other mode could be found of inflicting the doom he had merited. As for the king, rash, young, and hot-tempered, and who seems to have acted, not through premeditation, but the fierce impulse of the moment, a still greater palliation can be presented

¹ Pitscottie, p. 100.

² *Auchinleck Chronicle*, p. 46.

³ Pitscottie, 101-103; *Auchinleck Chronicle*, pp. 46, 47

in the causeless insult with which his advances were received and his entreaties contemptuously rejected. The more peaceful part of the nation rejoiced in the death of the earl, without caring for its justification or calculating about its consequences, for Douglas had throughout been a tyrant, and the protector of thieves and homicides, and they knew that as long as he lived there could neither be peace nor safety. But it was necessary to follow such a deed with instant action, for the Douglasses were maddened into frenzy, and their cry was for havoc and revenge. Aware that no time was to be lost, James gathered an army and advanced to Perth to assail the Earl of Crawford, who might now be considered as the most dangerous person of the confederacy. The Douglasses in the meantime were not idle. At the time of the assassination James, the eldest brother of the late earl, his brothers, the Earls of Ormond and Moray, and Lord Balvenie and Lord Hamilton of Cadzow, were in Stirling; and on hearing of the murder they assembled in private conclave, acknowledged James Douglas as their earl and head according to the will of the deceased, and then hastily dispersed to gather their retainers. They were not long in returning to Stirling, although it was only with six hundred men; and on finding that the king and his councillors were gone, they blew out twenty-four horns at once against James and all who had aided him in the deed, after which loud note of defiance they nailed the safe-conduct that had been granted to their late chief upon a board and caused it to be dragged through the streets at a horse's tail. They then proceeded to plunder the town and burned it to the ground. Their next movement was to waste the crown lands and the estates of those who were adherents of the king, and among the latter was the Earl of Angus, who, though a Douglas and a near kinsman, had refused to join them, and was therefore more hated than all the rest. The whole lands and possessions of the earl round Dalkeith were wasted with fire and sword, and the castle itself besieged, the assailants swearing that they would not quit it until they had levelled it to the ground. But the castle of Dalkeith was strong, and its garrison brave and determined, so that after a heavy loss both of men and time the besiegers were obliged to retire.¹

While the Douglasses were thus wasting their opportunities in idle forays, and upon a paltry fortress, James was proceeding upon a great and systematic scale of action that promised the happiest results. He strengthened his cause and confirmed his supporters by distributing among

them the forfeited lands of the traitors, and intrusted the war against Crawford to the Earl of Huntly, whom he raised to the important office of lieutenant-general of the kingdom. Huntly soon showed himself worthy of the honour by the activity of his proceedings, and at the head of a formidable array of his own Gordons, as well as large reinforcements of those barons whom he had attracted to the royal standard by promises of plunder and confiscations, he advanced towards the town of Brechin, upon a level moor near which the warlike and ferocious "Tiger" was encamped and ready for his coming. The forces of the Earl of Huntly outnumbered those of Crawford; but the latter nevertheless bore themselves so gallantly in the fight, that they were on the point of becoming victors when one of those cases of desertion so frequent in the civil wars of the period completely turned the scale.² Among the adherents of the Tiger Earl was John Colessie of Bonnymoon or Balnamoon, commander of a large body of men armed with battle-axes, and on whose co-operation the earl greatly relied; but on the evening before the battle Crawford had offended him by refusing to bestow an estate that was in his possession upon young Colessie, his son. Incensed at this refusal the selfish commander of the axemen deserted with all his followers at the critical moment to the other party, and was followed by several other detachments. The Lindsays were daunted at this proof of insincerity and began to give ground, a movement which was at last changed into a reluctant flight, notwithstanding the desperate efforts of their redoubted lord to repair the mischief and lead them back to the charge. The battle of Brechin was a heavy loss to the Earl of Crawford, as his brother, Sir John Lindsay of Brechin, and sixty gentlemen of coat-armour lay dead on the field, while on the other side two brothers of the Earl of Huntly, and several gentlemen were among the slain.³ Crawford himself was swept away in the flight, and compelled to join in it, while in the eagerness of the chase a squire of the Gordons was so entangled among the fugitives that, to save his life, he pretended to be one of their party, and thus became an unwilling guest in the castle of Finhaven, to which the fliers betook themselves for shelter, as well as an unnoticed spectator of the wild orgies that followed. He thus heard the horrid sentiment of the bearded earl

² In the wars of the Roses in England a few years later (in A.D. 1459) Sir Andrew Trollop deserted from the Yorkists to the Lancastrians in a similar manner, in consequence of which the Duke of York was obliged to disperse his army. On the following year Lord Grey de Ruthyn deserted from the Lancastrians to the Yorkists, in consequence of which the latter were in their turn victorious.

³ *Auchinleck Chronicle*, p. 48.

¹ *Auchinleck Chronicle*, p. 47; *Pitcottie*, p. 104.

expressed with fiendish energy as soon as he recovered breath to speak his mind to those who accompanied him. He would willingly, he said, spend seven years in hell to get such a victory as Huntly had gained, and one that would be so well applauded.¹ Notwithstanding his defeat, however, he would fly no farther than the castle of Finhaven, and while the war was closing around him he mercilessly turned upon those who had deserted him in battle, razing their houses to the ground, and wasting their possessions with fire and sword.² On the other hand, the Earl of Huntly wasted the lands of the Earl of Moray with such severity that the latter only saved his life by flight. He then came to the town of Elgin to punish its defaulters, which he did with a scrupulous attention to feudal justice; for the one side of the town, which was inhabited by the adherents of the Douglasses, was committed to the flames, while the other side, which was occupied by people of his own party, was carefully spared.³

The war which was thus continuing so unsuccessfully for the party of Douglas only confirmed the latter in their resistance; and not content with their own powerful resources and the mischiefs of a civil war, they resolved for their own advantage to augment these miseries by the national evil of a foreign invasion. They accordingly negotiated with the Yorkists, now the prevalent party in the English government, and offered, as the pledge of a bond for mutual union and support, to transfer their allegiance to England. Through the advice of the patriotic and sagacious Bishop Kennedy, who probably was not ignorant of these disloyal transactions, James summoned a parliament to meet at Edinburgh on the 12th of June, 1452. Its first proceedings were decisive; for after a decree of forfeiture against the Earl of Crawford as a traitor, the other great defaulters, James Earl of Douglas, the Earl of Moray and the Lord of Balvenie, the Earl of Ross, James Lord Hamilton, with other barons of their party, were summoned to appear on a certain day before the parliament and answer to the offences that should be laid to their charge. They did not appear on the summons, and it was probably not expected that they would; but on the night after it was issued they sent their emissaries into the city to learn the proceedings of parliament and affix a placard upon its doors and those of the principal churches. In this paper, subscribed with his own hand and sealed with his signet, the Earl of Douglas renounced his

allegiance to the king; and among the reasons which he stated for this act he charged James with being a murderer of his own kindred, a violator of the laws of hospitality, and a tyrant who thirsted for innocent blood without cause or occasion.⁴ The king resolved to pursue these impracticable enemies to the uttermost, but before proceeding to action he was careful to reward those faithful followers who had hitherto adhered to his doubtful fortunes, or whose future services he was anxious to secure. Three nobles were therefore elevated to the rank of earls; these were Sir James Crichton, son and heir of Sir William Crichton, the chancellor, who was created Earl of Moray in the room of Archibald Douglas, who had now forfeited the title by being in arms against the king. But besides such a consideration the promotion of Crichton seems to have been only an act of justice, as he had married the eldest daughter of the former Earl of Moray, while Archibald Douglas during that disturbed period had been invested with the title, although his claim was through his wife, who was a younger daughter of the earl. Lord Hay, Constable of Scotland, was made Earl of Errol, and Sir George Crichton of Cairns Earl of Caithness. In like manner the barons Derneley, Hales, Boyd of Kilmarnock, Fleming of Cumbernauld, Borthwick, Lyle, and Cathcart were made lords of parliament. Other lands which had belonged to the Douglasses and their adherents were conferred upon Lord Campbell, his son Sir Colin, Sir Alexander Hume, Sir David Home, and Sir James Ker and others; but as these were bestowed not by the parliament but by the Secret or Privy Council, the tenure upon which their new occupants held them was liable to future question, and could only be made good by the prevalence of the party through which they had been granted.⁵

By the same parliament also a proclamation was made commanding each man liable to military service, whether on horseback or on foot, to repair to Edinburgh under forfeiture of life and goods; and at the summons there appeared on the day appointed an army of 30,000 mustered upon Pentland Moor. Placing himself at their head the king passed onward to the districts of Peebles, Selkirk, and Dumfries, where his enemies were in greatest strength; but as it was now the season of autumn, while none ventured to oppose him in the field, all that he could effect was to waste their cornfields and destroy their pasture and goods, which was done without compunction. This destructive part of the foray, indeed, appears to have been

¹ Pitscottie, p. 107.

² Pitscottie; Balfour's *Annals*; *Auchinleck Chronicle*; Drummond of Hawthornden's *History of Scotland* from A.D. 1423 to A.D. 1542.

³ Pitscottie, p. 108.

⁴ Ibid. pp. 108-110.

⁵ *Auchinleck Chronicle*, p. 49.

done without his permission, as the wild havoc wrought by his army extended in many cases to the lands of those gentlemen who were under his banner as well as their enemies. It was not, however, in vain if we may judge from its results, for Earl Douglas was obliged to abate his insolence and subscribe to terms of submission. To this he was probably urged by the remonstrances of those whose property had suffered by the invasion, and who may have thought that they had already lost enough in his cause and given sufficient proofs of their fidelity. In this bond, subscribed in the castle of Douglas on the 28th day of August, 1452, the earl agreed to the following conditions:—He would lay no claim to the lands of the earldom of Wigtown forfeited by his brother Earl William, and intended by James as a gift to the queen, without the consent and agreement of the latter. In like manner he abandoned all claim to the lordship of Stewarton, which belonged to the late Duchess of Touraine, till such time as he should obtain the royal permission to reclaim them. He bound himself on his own part, and that of his brother, and James Lord Hamilton, to remit and forgive for evermore all rancour of heart, malice, feud, disagreement, and envy which he or any of his entertained, or might entertain in time to come, against any of the king's lieges for any actions, causes, or quarrels bygone, and especially to all of them that had art or part in the slaughter of his brother, the late Earl of Douglas, and to "take these persons in heartliness and friendship," at the ordinance and advice of his sovereign lord the king! After further pledging himself in behalf of his tenants and renters, whether of his own or his late brother's, that they should remain undisturbed in the possessions and rights which they now held, he revokes all leagues and bonds against his sovereign, if any such he has made in times past, and promises to make neither bond nor league in time coming that shall be contrary to his highness. He would remit and forgive any rents or dues which the king might have levied or which the queen might have distrained in Galloway. He bound himself as warden or liegeman to his sovereign to defend the Borders and Borderers and observe faithfully the truces that might be established. He bound and obliged himself to do to his sovereign lord the king honour and worship as far as lay in his power, having such surety as he can be content in reason for safety of his life. And finally he obliged himself that all harms done and goods taken under assurance of safety should be compensated and restored.¹

¹ From Sir Lewis Stewart's collections quoted in appendix to vol. iv. of Tytler's *History of Scotland*, letter E.

Such was the total surrender of the man who had so lately nailed his defiance upon the doors of the parliament and the churches. From the whole conduct of this Earl James, so much in contrast with the former Douglasses, we are compelled to remember his past clerical training as well as that dull monastic cell in which his career was to terminate.

Although the earl was so greatly humbled he was still too powerful to be suppressed; and the facility with which the king not only released him from the penalties of treason, but replaced him in his former power and possessions, proves that before the earl consented to such stipulations he had been assured of the favourable terms with which his submission would be rewarded. He was reinstated in the lands of the earldom of Wigtown and lordship of Stewarton, which he had apparently been so ready to surrender. He was even allowed to send to Rome for a dispensation to marry the widow of his brother, Earl William, once the Fair Maid of Galloway, by which he would have succeeded to those ample possessions which had been detached from the family by a female inheritance. Whether the dispensation for this unnatural union was obtained, and whether the marriage actually took place, are so contradictorily answered by the different historians who wrote the events of this obscure period that we cannot tell the positive result; but if the widow actually escaped the infliction of becoming the wife of her brother-in-law it would seem at least that he retained her within his power and administered to her estates as if he had been their lawful owner. In 1453 he was also commissioned with an embassy to England, in company with the Abbot of Melrose and Robert Liddel of Ballymine, to extend the truce which would have expired in the following year. It was accordingly protracted to May, 1457.² But though apparently given up to such peaceful and patriotic employments, the Earl of Douglas while in London was not neglectful of his own selfish and ambitious interests; and there is reason to believe that he was intriguing with the Yorkists and negotiating for that aid by which he would be enabled once more to raise the standard of revolt against his sovereign when the opportunity for action had arrived.

All these contingencies do not seem to have entered into the king's calculations when he had humbled his rebellious vassal; he was eager to suppress the other branches of the coalition, and may have thought it much that their head was, for the time at least, reduced to a state of neutrality. The Tiger Earl, though defeated,

² Rymer, xi. 324, 336, 339.

had not been subdued; and leaving the Earl of Douglas in quiet, James mustered a small but chosen force with which he advanced towards the insurrectionary districts over which this bearded potentate held rule. But a change had already come over the stout spirit of the Earl of Crawford. Hitherto his allegiance had been to the head of the Douglasses rather than that of the Stewarts; but when his chief, with whom he hoped to rise to promotion, had so shamefully succumbed he saw no reason for continuing the contest alone and bearing the whole brunt of the war, which was certain to be too hard for him. He resolved to save himself by submission, and he effected his purpose in a manner that was wholly his own. Accordingly, while the king was passing through Angus his march was suddenly arrested by a bare-headed, bare-footed man, "clad as he had been a miserable caitiff guilty of a crime, committed in judgment, dolorous and in poor arrayment, to make the judges have commiseration and pity;" and he was followed by a train clad in like fashion with himself.¹ It was the Earl of Crawford come to confess his offences and sue for pardon and remission! Shedding tears abundantly, as was proper for such an occasion, he fell down at the king's feet, who could not guess what wight he was or on what errand he had come until some of his courtiers, who probably had been made aware of the purpose and favoured the interlude, gave him to know that this was the far-famed Earl Beardy whom he had come to chastise. On being desired to rise up and take courage the earl dried his eyes, and, according to the historian, commenced a harangue; but as it is of the true classical length and formality we may well imagine that it was only what it was supposed he might, or would, or could, or should have uttered. At all events he confessed his crimes, declared his penitence, and was gladdened by the royal forgiveness; and not only himself but his friends, allies, and supporters were admitted to full pardon. This act of complete and undeserved clemency so highly delighted the earl that from a rebel he became one of the most loyal and devoted of James' subjects. He accompanied him in his progress, regaled him magnificently in his castle of Finhaven, and promised to be ready with all his forces to fight against the king's enemies, whensoever and wheresoever he might be commanded. Nor was the repentance of this grim convertite a feigned or fleeting impression; for the historian adds, he "gave over all kind of tyranny and became a faithful subject and sicker target to the king and his subjects." But his conver-

sion was not tried by too long an ordeal, for only six months afterwards he died of a burning fever and was interred in the Greyfriars' Church of Dundee, the burial-place of his ancestors.²

While the land had been vexed with civil contentions it had at the same time been signalized by the establishment of a peaceful institution; this was the University of Glasgow, founded by William Turnbull, bishop of that see, in consequence of a permission which he had obtained from Pope Nicholas, A.D. 1450, to that effect. On the following year the papal bull was publicly proclaimed at the cross of Glasgow and the infant institution solemnly inaugurated. At the close of 1454 died Lord Crichton, chancellor of the kingdom, whose history, we have seen, is so closely interwoven with that of his royal master. During the minority of James II. his unscrupulous ambition was sufficiently notorious, and the means by which he sought to establish his authority, both by the coercion of his royal ward and the destruction of the Douglasses, have stamped his character with imperishable reprobation. His alliance with his youthful sovereign when he found that he could no longer wage the conflict alone, and that he could best succeed as the councillor of James, was one of those changes so usual in the career of the selfish politicians of all ages that the only wonder would have been if he had acted otherwise. He was faithful to the king when he found that with the king he must rise or fall, and his counsels were wise and judicious because his own interests were involved in their success. The last time in which any notice of him occurs was in the king's expedition into Angus against the Earl of Crawford, while the submission of the latter is alleged to have been mainly suggested and the subsequent pardon obtained through the offices of this wily politician. So greatly was he valued by the king that the tidings of his death were withheld from him until they could no longer be concealed.³

In the meantime the Douglasses continued their intrigues with England, indifferent alike to the independence of their native land and their own obligations and promises of allegiance. But the state of England at this time was even more precarious than that of Scotland itself, for it was rent in twain by the Yorkists and Lancastrians, and on the eve of commencing that long and destructive civil war which only terminated with the accession of Henry VII. It was with the former party and its head that the Earl of Douglas had hitherto negotiated; and

¹ Pitscottie, pp. 113, 114.

² Idem, p. 123.

³ *Auchinleck Chronicle*, p. 52.

now that they were about to try the arbitration of war, they could not afford the demanded supplies of men and money for these Scottish feuds without exacting a large recompense. This Lord Hamilton, the envoy of Douglas, was given to understand; for he was told that no aid could be given from England unless the Douglas faction would take the oath of homage to the English crown.¹ What reply Hamilton made to this demand we are not told; but even had the required submission been made it would have come too late, for while the Yorkists were too completely engrossed by their own difficulties to aid such distant allies, James of Scotland was in the field, and waging a successful war against Douglas and all his faction.

The particulars of this decisive campaign against the Douglasses are related so briefly in our earliest writers, and with so many contradictions both of dates and facts, that nothing of it can be given beyond a scanty outline. Advertised, as there is reason to suspect, of the intrigues of the earl with the Yorkists, James, in the beginning of March (1455), proceeded to action by besieging the castle of Inveravin and levelling it with the ground. He then passed forward to Glasgow, and having gathered reinforcements of the crown vassals of the west and the men of the Highlands, he advanced through Lanark to Douglasdale and Avondale, which he wasted with fire and sword. Nor did the lands of Hamilton escape, and while their lord was intriguing in England they were swept and spoiled in the invasion. After this destructive chastisement James proceeded to Edinburgh; but, without delaying his progress, he advanced at the head of a Lowland army upon the forests of Ettrick and Selkirk, compelling the gentlemen of these districts to meet him with submission and destroying the goods and houses of those who refused. He next laid siege to the castle of Abercorn, one of the chief possessions of the Earl of Douglas, which, from the strength and height of its walls and the ignorance of its assailants, held out for a whole month against the attacks of the royal army. It was at last taken by escalade; and while the officers were forthwith executed as rebels the common soldiers of the garrison were dismissed without punishment, and the castle was thrown down. During this siege several interesting incidents occurred that give a freshness to the narrative. Among the royal followers was a certain Allan Panter, described as being "the most ingenious man that was in Scotland, and most subtle in many diverse things." Wherein his remarkable ability consisted we are not otherwise told, but we may

conclude, from such a mode and place of mention, that he was an able military engineer—a character at that time rare in Scotland. But, pressing too near the walls, he was slain by a missile, while his death was heavily lamented both by the king and nobles.² In battering the towers the king's chief reliance seems to have been a great gun, which was directed by a Frenchman who "shot right well and failed no shot within a fathom where it was charged him to hit."³ While the siege was going on the Earl of Douglas mustered his forces and advanced upon the royal encampment; but on seeing the strength of the king's army he hastily retreated, dispersed such of his followers as remained with him, and fled. Lord Hamilton, through whose desertion from the earl this failure was chiefly occasioned, as his example had been followed by the rest of the army, was committed by the king to the custody of the Earl of Orkney in the castle of Roslin; but soon afterwards, through the intercession of Bishop Kennedy, he was not only restored to liberty, but also to his rank and possessions. It was probably through the instigation of this politic prelate that he had deserted from his powerful associate, and the restoration with which it was so quickly followed may have been the promised price of his treachery.⁴

In the meantime Douglas, who had fled towards the English border, accompanied by his three brothers Archibald, Earl of Moray, Hugh, Earl of Ormond, and John, Lord of Balvenie, had contrived to conceal himself so effectually that none were able to guess in what quarter he was lurking. He was not, however, so effectually concealed as to be unaware of the progress of the royal arms and the daily defection of those barons who had pledged themselves to his cause. To avoid being hunted in his lair, or driven out of Scotland, he decided to make one desperate effort more in the field; and for this purpose he descended into Annandale at the head of a party of English borderers, and was quickly joined by the desperate men of his own faction whom the royal arms had failed to subdue. But this rabble, so different from the armies that had been wont to muster under the banner of the crowned heart, were soon met by his kinsman, the Earl of Angus, with whom were the chief Border barons who had lately been the allies of the house of Douglas, but had now become the liegemen of the king. The hostile encounter took place at Arkinholm on the river Esk opposite Wauchop; but against such a well-

² *Ibid.*, p. 54.³ *Ibid.*⁴ Letter of James II. to Charles VII. of France in D'Archer's *Spicilegium*, vol. iii. p. 801; Pitscottie.¹ *Auchinleck Chronicle*, 53.

appointed army as that of Angus the utmost efforts of the Earl of Douglas were useless, although he fought with the energy and courage of despair: his armed rabble were cut to pieces, or swept from the field; Archibald, Earl of Moray, fell in the battle; and Hugh, Earl of Ormond, after being desperately wounded, was taken prisoner and carried to Edinburgh, where his wounds were no sooner healed than he was beheaded as a traitor. The Earl of Douglas himself, with his only remaining brother John, Lord Balvenie, escaped with difficulty by flying to a wood. The first tidings which the king received of this utter defeat of his enemies was from a soldier, who laid at his feet the gory head of the Earl of Moray.¹ After this victory James, with his usual promptitude, convoked a parliament which assembled on the 9th of June (1455), and here the sentence of forfeiture was declared against the Earl of Douglas, his mother Beatrix, and his brothers Moray and Balvenie. In the summons previously issued against these defaulters, in which all their acts of manifest rebellion were specified, not the least of these was their traitorous connection with England, which was certain to seal their unpopularity.²

After this utter downfall of his power the earl, instead of giving himself up to despair, resolved to try his fortune anew. His influence was at an end in Scotland, while England could afford him no aid; but still a limb of the old Douglas confederacy survived in John, Lord of the Isles, and Earl of Ross, whose rule over his remote territories was scarcely less than that of absolute sovereignty. Glad of an opportunity of havoc and spoil, he received the fugitive earl with welcome and fitted out an expedition in his behalf, consisting of five or six thousand men who were conveyed in a fleet of a hundred galleys under the command of Donald Balloch, his kinsman. The proceedings of these desperate rieviers of the sea were still in the ancient Norse style, although the exploits they achieved and the plunder they gathered bore but a poor proportion to the greatness of their armament. Landing at Inverkip they there destroyed certain farm-houses or huts, after which they devastated the island of Arran, demolished the castle of Brodick, and wasted the almost invisible islands of the Greater and Lesser Cumbraes. The slaughter effected by this formidable host over such a wide field of invasion amounted to fifteen "good men," two or three women, and three or four children, while the booty they contrived to gather consisted of five or six hundred horses, a thousand oxen and cows, and about as

many sheep and goats. They doubtless did their best and their worst both in slaying and plundering; and it speaks for the improved condition of Scotland at the period that they were able to achieve so little. They also landed upon Bute, which they subjected to ransom, and this consisted of a hundred bolls of oatmeal, a hundred bolls of malt, a hundred marts, and a hundred marks of silver.³

While this paltry expedition was in progress the Earl of Douglas, probably foreseeing its useless results, and how little it was calculated to promote his interests, betook himself once more to England, where he was received with favour by the Duke of York, who for the time being was in the ascendancy, and gladdened with an annual pension of five hundred pounds until his Scottish estates should be recovered. Even in granting this pension York could not refrain from asserting the right of the English crown to the possession of Scotland; and in the written grant he mentioned James II. as the person who then called himself "King of Scots." The Duke of York was a competitor for the English throne, and nothing could more ingratiate him into the favour of his countrymen and advance his claims than this old demand of superiority over Scotland, which for some time had fallen into abeyance. But here the ambitious prince did not stop, for he resolved to repeat such a popular claim not by a private rescript but an open and public demand of which all might be cognizant. He therefore soon after sent a letter to the Scottish king in the name of his sovereign Henry VI., of whom he was protector, and of which the following was the substance: After asserting it as a fact known to all men that Scotland by law appertained to the dominion of the English king as monarch of Britain from the earliest ages, and that James himself and his ancestors had acknowledged it, he proceeded to rate James in lordly terms for hardening his neck and lifting up his heel against his master and sovereign. Was he ignorant of the penalties of treason, and the punishment with which such a trespass was usually visited? Letters, he said, had been presented to him by a person calling himself the lion-herald and king-at-arms of James as sovereign of Scotland, filled with all manner of idle complaints and boastful threatenings; but that these he despised, and would answer them not by words but by deeds. After continuing in the same defiant and contemptuous strain, and accusing James of being the real aggressor and trespasser, he announced his purpose to put down all these rebellious attempts by such chastisement as was due to

¹ Letter of James II. to Charles VII.

² *Acts of the Parliaments of Scotland*, vol. ii. pp. 22, 75.

³ *Auchinleck Chronicle*, p. 55.

such arrogant rebellion—until which time he charitably committed the said James to the divine keeping and enlightenment.¹ Not Edward Longshanks himself could have addressed Baliol in a more imperious strain, with his foot upon the craven's neck, and the Ragman Roll lying subscribed before him. But now the position of the two kingdoms was altered, and the Duke of York, so far from being able to invade Scotland, was on the eve of being denounced in his own country as a rebel and traitor. . . .

To this insulting application it does not appear that James sent any reply; indeed, it neither needed nor deserved any, being nothing better than the empty flourish of a herald's trumpet, or an idle cartel of defiance where no combat was meant to follow. He was more usefully employed in holding meetings of parliament, in which laws were enacted for the security of the royal revenues, the defence of the Borders, and the internal government of the kingdom. While thus occupied two fair suppliants arrived successively at his court to implore his clemency and protection. The first was she who had once been the Fair Maid of Galloway; that rich and beautiful heiress who, in little more than childhood, was espoused by her ambitious cousin William, Earl of Douglas, who, after the assassination of her husband at Stirling, and while still in helpless youth as well as unprotected widowhood, was seized by his successor as wife, mistress, or prisoner, but in any case as the wealthy heiress of Galloway, by whom the power, wealth, and possessions of the overgrown earldom of Douglas would be rounded and completed. In this way she was transferred from one brother to another with as little scruple on their part, and with as little power of resistance on hers, as if she had been a signet ring, by which the holder was entitled to draw rents and seal acquittances. Feeling the ignominy of her situation, and encouraged by the absence of her unworthy lord in England, she now fled to the king, imploring mercy for her offences which she attributed to her ignorance and helplessness, and the violence of Earl James, who had forced her into a union which she was impatient to escape. The king raised the unfortunate suppliant from her knees, and not only received her to favour, but provided her with a third husband in his own uterine brother, Sir John Stewart, son of the Black Knight of Lorn, who was soon afterwards created Earl of Athole. In this way James wisely secured the inheritance among his own kindred, as she was the mother of two daughters by Athole, while her previous unions had been childless. The other

lady who fled from an odious husband to the shelter of the king was the wife of John, Earl of Ross and Lord of the Isles, the sworn ally of the Douglasses, and now in arms against his sovereign. She was the daughter of Sir James Livingston, and, through the earnest mediation of the king, had been bestowed in marriage upon Ross, with the hope that the connection would civilize such a rude barbarian, detach him from his bond of alliance, and secure the peace of the islands. But finding this hope frustrated, and disgusted with his savage temper as well as encouraged by the success of the Lady of Galloway, the countess fled to the Scottish court and threw herself upon the royal protection. She was graciously received by James and endowed for life with an ample revenue.²

As the question of peace or war with England was now a precarious one, and wholly dependent upon the daily and almost hourly shifting of the politics of the English court, James was obliged to watch their changes with anxious solicitude and prepare for each transition. The disposition of the Duke of York, also, as manifested in his notable epistle, although it had led to no open declaration, appears to have been enough to excite those fierce mutual incursions on the Borders which even a proclamation of peace between the two countries could never effectually put a stop to. This is evident from the frequent parliamentary statutes which were enacted at this time for the protection of the Scottish borders and the innovations which were made in the important office of their wardenry. While York was protector there was little hope that a peaceful embassy from James would be favourably received, and therefore the attempt was not made; but Henry VI., having suddenly awoke from his intellectual stupor, was considered so far able to manage the affairs of the kingdom that York was obliged to resign his office and retire for a time into private life. James, who, from policy as a Scottish king and his relationship by his mother to the line of Gaunt, was on the side of the Lancastrians, embraced the favourable opportunity of securing the repose of his kingdom, and this he did by sending commissioners to the English court, by whom a truce between the two countries was negotiated which was to last till the 6th of July, 1459. But neither Earl Douglas, who was in England, nor the English Borderers, considered themselves bound by this agreement; and with the consent and aid of Henry Percy, Earl of Northumberland, an inroad of Northumbrians, joined by Scottish retainers of the exiled noble, was made into Berwickshire. Formidable

¹ Rymer's *Fœdera*, vol. xi. pp. 367-383.

² Pitscottie, p. 139.

though the force of the two earls was, it could scarcely have been hoped even by Douglas himself that in this way he could recover his forfeited possessions, or compel his sovereign to agreement: his only aim, indeed, seems to have been a blind impulse of revenge that made him regard every countryman as an enemy and every act of havoc as a lawful retaliation. But this desperate invasion was quickly encountered by the Earl of Angus, and so successfully that both Douglas and Percy were put to flight after they had lost nearly two thousand of their followers in killed and prisoners.¹ This victory was so welcome to James that Angus, who was grandson of the first Earl of Douglas and by his mother connected with the royal family, was rewarded with the forfeited estates of the renegade. Being thus a Douglas, and now the representative of the house, it was natural that the adherents of the banished earl should transfer their feudal devotedness to their new political head and territorial landlord. But it was certainly a dangerous remedy to extinguish one despot by raising another as powerful in his room; and it was not long until the earls of Angus became as formidable rivals to the crown as those of the elder house whom they superseded. In favour of James, however, it may be noted that Scottish feudalism was too deeply rooted to be thus early and easily destroyed; and that his only resource was to keep it in check by royal benefits, and by balancing as an umpire the power of one noble against another. Perhaps even Louis XI. himself, had he been King of Scotland instead of France, could have done no more.

The late defeat of the Earl of Douglas, followed so quickly as it was by the utter overthrow of his influence in Scotland, was a loud warning to John of Ross and the Isles, now the only remaining head of the Douglas coalition, and apparently destined to be its last victim. Perhaps, also, his alarm was not a little quickened by the desertion of his countess and the cordiality with which she had been received by the king. On the other hand, he was encouraged by the royal clemency of James, that had so freely pardoned the Earl of Crawford and continued him in all his honours and possessions. He resolved to submit also since better might not be; but, being an offender of longer standing, he would not unconditionally intrust himself to the king's mercy as his brother conspirator had done. Instead, therefore, of repairing to James in person, he warily sent a special friend to negotiate the terms of his submission. The conduct of the king on this occasion, and at a period

when he had engrafted the wisdom of experience and the precautions of political sagacity upon his naturally hot, open, unsuspecting temperament, was worthy of the pupil of Chancellor Crichton, and is thus amusingly described by the old historian: "The king's majesty led the matter very craftily, and found the means how he would not openly and plainly forgive at that present the wicked and treasonable deeds of this wicked tyrant; nor yet would he make the messengers despair of their chief's remission, but answered them very craftily, and gently holding them in hope, saying that the Earl of Ross never deserved to be remitted at his hand, for his cruelty and rebellion lately committed, yet . . . because it pertains only to God to know the inward thoughts and hearts of men, and that man's nature cannot perceive further than he sees by outward tokens and signs, therefore he would that the Earl of Ross should do some notable act, whereby all men should perceive and understand that he repented entirely with his heart before he should receive full remission of all his offences."² What this "notable act" might be James was too prudent to announce either to the messengers or to the nobles who backed their supplication. The next part of the earl's probation was of a more intelligible character, for it was "that he should refund all the scathe of towns, fortalices, and villages that he had either burnt or casten down, and to restore the goods and gear to every man that he had taken away." From subsequent events it appears that the island lord accepted these conditions, and that the king had no reason to repent of his clemency.

After the difficulties and toils of years had been so successfully surmounted there appeared the full promise of a prosperous and tranquil reign. The formidable confederacy of the great nobles against the crown had been utterly subdued. A new Douglas had arisen who was the champion rather than the enemy of the throne. The great earldom of Mar, which had reverted to the crown by the death of its chivalrous possessor, was peacefully held by John, the king's third son. The Borders were both watched and guarded, and the isles with their lord reduced to peace and obedience. In the parliaments which had been assembled during this reign and the statutes they enacted we perceive a spirit of national improvement which a few years of peace would have ripened into a whole century of ordinary progress. James also, to whom this change must have been a frequent subject of self-congratulation, was only twenty-seven years old, and might therefore confidently

¹ Pitscottie, p. 141.

² Pitscottie, p. 143.

hope that as yet his career had not even reached its meridian, and that the calm and sunshine which had succeeded a morning of storm and cloud would brighten as the day went onward. But of no Scottish sovereign was this to be the happy destiny, and the Nemesis that had doomed his race to woe and ruin had sealed him in his cradle and been the nurse of his infancy and boyhood. The sky was about to gather into a deeper gloom and the storm to arise before which he was to be swept away!

The further events of this reign which was to terminate so abruptly are so closely mixed and complicated with the civil war in England between the Yorkists and Lancastrians that it becomes difficult to trace them; even our earliest historians, to whom this war of the Roses seems to have been in a great measure unintelligible, give the most contradictory accounts of the part which James took in it, and represent him as the adherent of the Yorkists, while on the contrary he was evidently allied with their rivals and a sufferer in their cause. Was it that he received terms from both parties alike in a commotion where the welfare of his kingdom was so deeply at stake; and that on this account he shifted his support from the one party to the other, according as the chances might further his patriotic purposes? By adopting this solution we might easily reconcile the contradictory statements of the old historians, while such a proceeding on his part might be represented as both just and politic. But no historical authority bears us out in attributing to him such a usual process of kingly and political double-dealing; and in the absence of this we throw conjecture aside, and briefly touch the principal points of his career which preceded its disastrous termination.

The truce established with England which was to terminate in 1459 was about to expire when by a fresh agreement it was continued nine years longer. It has been surmised that something more, however, than the establishment of a truce was the prime object of this negotiation, and that the object of James was to obliterate the last tokens of the subjection of his country to England in the days of the first and third Edwards. It is even alleged by one of our old historians that Henry VI., in consideration of the aid which he was to receive from James, had agreed to restore Northumberland, Durham, and several adjacent districts to the Scottish crown; but Henry, or rather his queen, Margaret, who ruled in his name, would scarcely have ventured upon such an unpopular cession even if disposed to pay so ruinous a price. That some private agreement, however, was entered into is not improbable, and that

the restitution of the vexatious towns of Roxburgh and Berwick was the utmost of James' demands is equally likely. He must have known, indeed, that a grant of such a county as Northumberland, however subscribed and sealed, could be nothing better than a piece of waste parchment, when every acre of the ground in question must have been won and maintained at the sword-point. Henry also could well afford to restore these towns, as they were not only originally a part of Scotland, and therefore might be given up without loss of honour, but also with great advantage to his own cause, as they were held and garrisoned by his enemies the Yorkists.

Encouraged by the terms of this secret bargain, whatever in reality they were, James resolved to carry a war into the English border, where the Yorkists were strongest and where his own purposes could be best accomplished. Notwithstanding the truce there was no difficulty in finding a pretext for his aggression, when the incursions of the English Borderers in the cause of the Earl of Douglas as well as their subsequent hostilities were taken into account. The invading army of James is said to have amounted to 60,000 men, but we may easily imagine that at least half of these were hungry camp-followers—men who could as effectually waste a hostile country as those who marched in the front with shield and spear. Crossing the Border on the 16th of August (1459), they marched twenty miles into the interior, where they remained six days upon English ground, during which time they plundered and destroyed without opposition and razed seventeen Border castles and fortalices. But in this wild havoc they appear to have made no distinction between Henry's loyal subjects and the adherents of his rival; and alarmed at the proceedings of such dangerous allies, he hastily despatched a messenger to the Scottish king entreating him to desist, and assuring him that he could put down his enemies without further aid. James complied with so reasonable a request, and recrossed the Borders without opposition or loss.¹ But no sooner had this sudden invasion terminated than the Duke of York resolved to retaliate by an inroad into Scotland, and at the head of an army of 40,000 or 50,000 soldiers he advanced to the marches. It was a formidable storm that had thus gathered upon the Scottish frontier if we take into account not only the strength of the English array but the military renown of its leader, the skill and prowess of the Earl of Salisbury, and the valour of those nobles

¹ *Auchinleck Chronicle*, p. 57.

who marched under his banner. But notwithstanding the high expectations they had raised they went no farther than the Border; there, according to the brief and simple narrative, "they discorded and passed home."¹ It is easy to perceive the cause of such a disagreement. This march was but an interruption to that more deadly purpose of civil discord which was now ready and impatient for action, and these nobles were soon to confront each other with a deeper hatred than that which they bore against the Scots.

On his return James resumed his peaceful legislative duties, and the proceedings of his parliament evince that desire for national improvement which had now begun to predominate with every interval of peace. But in a few months these useful avocations were again interrupted by the harsh summons of war that called the king to his last field. The strife in England between the houses of York and Lancaster had burst out in full fury and with alternate success until Henry, by his defeat at Northampton, was a prisoner in the Tower, and his queen and young son Edward fugitives in Scotland. To receive the forlorn exiles with generous courtesy and provide for them a comfortable home was the first and most natural proceeding of James, and to the appeals for assistance from such a woman as Margaret of Anjou he could scarcely be insensible. It was now full time to interpose in behalf of her husband, while there was no need to fear that his interference would again be checked as over-zealous or unseasonable. It was also the most favourable of opportunities for the recovery of those Border towns of Roxburgh and Berwick which had been torn from Scotland in seasons of similar anarchy and misrule. It has been asked under what pretext James could justly violate the truce that had already been established between the two kingdoms; but he might have answered that it was with his kinsman and ally, the lawful King of England, that the truce had been ratified, and not with the rebels who had thrown all order and government loose, imprisoned their sovereign, and driven his son and heir from the kingdom.

Having adopted his resolution James proceeded to act upon it with his usual promptitude; and without waiting for the whole of his array he crossed the Border with a force sufficient to commence the war, and appointed his chief officers to join him as soon as their musters were completed. His first attempt was upon Roxburgh, which had been in the hands of the English since the battle of Durham, and the re-

covery of which was a point of national honour with the Scots. The town quickly yielded to his assaults, but its strong castle, which was garrisoned by Nevil Lord Fauconberg, a relation of the great king-maker, Warwick, held out and threatened a tedious siege, which, however, James was the more willing to undergo as he was joined at this time by the reinforcements which he had expected. The foremost of these was the repentant Earl of Ross, who to prove his new loyalty had offered to march a full mile ahead of the royal army on the first invasion into England and abide the first brunt of the engagement. He now came with a large force of his Highlanders and islesmen, armed in their best array of mail-shirts, having chiefly for their offensive weapons the bow and the heavy northern axe; and they soon gave proofs of their usefulness by wasting the country round and stopping the supplies that would have been conveyed to the castle. Ross was soon followed by the Earl of Huntly with 6000 men, by whose arrival James judged his force to be so complete that he opened the siege of the castle in regular form and ordered the heavy artillery which he had planted to commence upon the walls. But the pieces he used, and that had been forged in Flanders, were still of rude workmanship, while the Scots, as yet little practised in handling them, were awkward and dangerous engineers. The chief bombard in this battery, called the Lion, was, like the rest, composed of bars of iron placed lengthways, clasped with iron hoops that were closed together and made air-tight by wooden wedges. Eager to prove its power or witness its effects, James advanced too closely to the piece while it was about to be discharged; it burst in the operation, and one of its wooden wedges struck him with such force as almost instantly to deprive him of life. With the same explosion the gallant Earl of Angus, who stood near him, was severely wounded. The king had only time to command the by-standers to be silent and conceal his death from the army lest it should discourage them, when he breathed his last.²

Such was the end of James II., in the twenty-ninth year of his age and twenty-fourth of his reign. The event occurred on the latter part of August, 1460, as the siege is stated to have been opened on the third Sunday of that month. He obtained from his countrymen the name of "James with the Fiery Face," from a broad red spot upon one of his cheeks. By his queen he had three sons, James, his successor; Alexander, Duke of Albany; and John, Earl of Mar; and

¹ *Auchinleck Chronicle*, p. 57.

² Lesley; Mair; Balfour's *Annals*; Pitscottie.

two daughters, Mary and Margaret, who were both afterwards married to Scottish noblemen. The character of James II. has been distinctly indicated in the events of his changeful reign—events which he so ably and successfully controlled as to disarm them while he lived of their dangerous tendencies and make them subservient to the welfare of his kingdom. If the rash, unbridled impetuosity of youth hurried him to the assassination of Earl Douglas, the discretion with which he adopted the prudent counsels of Crichton and Bishop Kennedy may be taken as a counterpoise. The early manhood of his own independent proceedings, and the patience and prudence with which they were carried into effect, show that he had taken warning from the errors of his youth and profited by experience. In this respect he resembles Bruce himself after the assassination of the Red Comyn and the battle of Methven. To have broken the power of the Douglasses, which at one time was greater than his own, and reduced the dangerous confederacy of nobles to willing obedience, was an eminent token of his political abilities; while the success of his military enterprises showed that he only needed a better field to prove himself a skilful and successful leader. His high kingly talents and worth were but too sadly illustrated by the changes which ensued so closely upon his death, and which were continued during the whole reign of his unfortunate successor. "His life having set," says Drummond of Hawthornden, "in the orient of his age and hopes, he deserveth in the records of memory and fame a place amongst the best but unfortunate princes."

As soon as the mournful tidings of the king's death had reached Edinburgh all classes, to whom he had become endeared by his worth, were sunk in sorrow and despair; the hopes of a long and happy reign in which they had reasonably indulged were crushed in an instant.

But his high-spirited queen, Mary of Gueldres, whom the calamity most concerned, was too proud to cover her head with the veil of widowhood and resign herself to useless grief. On the contrary she resolved to repair to the camp and renew the spirits of the desponding soldiery; and in this way she may have divined that she could best fulfil the dying wishes of her husband. Accordingly, while the Scottish soldiers of the leaguer of Roxburgh were still leaning upon their spears and thinking of returning homeward in funeral procession, they were electrified with the sudden arrival of Mary into their encampment, bringing in her company her young son James, now their sovereign, the image and representative of him whose loss they deplored. Holding him by the hand and addressing them in a voice that was often broken with weeping, she adjured them to vindicate the honour of their country and the purposes of their king by continuing the siege until the castle was taken, instead of giving themselves up to grief, which was only fit for feeble womanhood.¹ The siege was instantly resumed with double ardour; and without waiting for the slow operations of the artillery the Scots pressed onward in their old wonted fashion, so that fosse, gate, and barbican were quickly won and the garrison compelled to capitulate. They were allowed to march out with their baggage, but the castle itself was razed to the ground, that it might no longer be a bridle upon the Scottish border and a shelter to its enemies. Wark Castle was at the same time or immediately after assailed and destroyed in like manner. The Scottish nobles and army then returned with the body of their sovereign, which was interred in the abbey of Holyrood; while James III., his eldest son and successor, was proclaimed in his stead.

¹ Buchanan; Pitscottie.

CHAPTER V.

REIGN OF JAMES III. (1460-1472).

Arrival of the queen and Prince James at the Scottish camp—Coronation of the prince as James III.—Margaret of Anjou arrives in Scotland—Negotiation and treaty between the two queens—Proposed restoration of Berwick—Violation of the public peace by a Highland chief—First parliament of James III.—Margaret of Anjou and Henry VI. compelled to flee to Scotland—Their new negotiations with the Scottish government—Intrigues of Edward IV. to prevent the Scots from invading England—He attempts to promote divisions among the Scottish nobles—Treaty of Henry VI. with the Earl of Angus—Rebellion of the Earl of Ross—He invades Athole—His disasters and death—Margaret of Anjou makes an unsuccessful landing in England—Her foreign auxiliaries rescued by the Earl of Angus—Matrimonial negotiation between Edward IV. and Mary of Gueldres—Death of Mary—Peace concluded between England and Scotland—Difficulty of maintaining the peace—Henry VI. leaves Scotland—Unfortunate close of his career—Hopeful condition of Scotland—It is interrupted by the ambition of the Boyds—Their compacts with the nobles—Death of Bishop Kennedy—His character and public administration—Loss to the kingdom by his death—Plot of the Boyds to obtain possession of the king's person—Its success—Proceedings of the parliament—Its enactments—The Boyds usurp the management of public affairs—Marriage of Sir Thomas Boyd to the sister of James III.—Marriage negotiation between James and a princess of Denmark—Causes of the selection of Denmark—Terms of the marriage treaty—Orkney and Shetland in consequence restored to Scotland—Downfall of the Boyds—Flight of Thomas Boyd and his wife to the Continent—Their unjust treatment from James III.—Death and character of Boyd—Marriage of James III. to Margaret of Denmark—He ends his minority and assumes the government—Prosperous condition of the kingdom at the commencement of his rule—Parliamentary enactments subversive of popular rights—Other enactments of an opposite character—Tenants freed from the debts of their landlords—Enactments of the succeeding parliament—Prohibition of the purchase of benefices from Rome—Acts for the national security and defence—Act for the encouragement of national fisheries—Sumptuary laws—Patrick Graham succeeds Kennedy as Bishop of St. Andrews—The old claim of the Archbishops of York over the Scottish church revived—St. Andrews erected into an archbishopric—Graham appointed primate of Scotland and papal legate—His authority opposed on his arrival in Scotland—Intrigues formed against him—He is excommunicated, condemned as a heretic, and imprisoned—His death.

On completing the demolition of the castles of Roxburgh and Wark the Scottish nobles took their young prince James to Kelso, where they crowned him king, he being then only in his eighth year.¹ Even already, however, the excellence of his father's rule was manifested in the cordiality with which his coronation was inaugurated, and the tranquil regularity with which the affairs of government were conducted during the first stages of his minority. His mother, Mary of Gueldres, whose heroic conduct at the siege of Roxburgh was so well fitted to endear her to a warlike nation, had been appointed to the sole superintendence of the young king, as well as of his brothers and sisters, a charge which was tantamount to the regency of the kingdom; but she appears to have wisely committed the education of James and the chief administration of government to James Kennedy, Bishop of St. Andrews, whose virtues and abilities had been so signally manifested during the troubles of the late reign.

The first public event after the coronation of James III. was the arrival into Scotland of the heroic English queen, Margaret of Anjou. She

had supported the falling cause of her imbecile husband against the Yorkists until the utter defeat of her army at Northampton made England no longer a safe residence for the representatives of the house of Lancaster. Accompanied by her young son, Prince Edward, the Dukes of Somerset and Exeter, and other persons of rank, and escorted by a thousand horse, Margaret fled to Scotland, and on arriving at Dumfries took up her temporary abode at the abbey of Lincluden. On the news of this arrival Mary of Gueldres and her son James repaired to Dumfries to welcome the unfortunate exiles; and the meeting of two such bold high-spirited queens and the measures they privately concerted were enough to arrest the attention and waken the conjectures of our early chroniclers. But in this meeting these writers have lost sight of the two princes, Edward and James, each of whom was now only eight years old, who were both to experience the full evils of rebellion in their respective kingdoms, and only to find a close at last from their troubles by the stroke of the murderer's dagger. The interviews between the Scottish and English queens were continued for ten or twelve days, and in requital for the promised aid of a Scottish army Margaret agreed

¹ *Auchinleck Chronicle*, p. 57.

to restore Berwick to the Scots, the loss of which had been a sore annoyance to them since the days of Edward Baliol. It has also been added, that to confirm their alliance a treaty of marriage was concluded between Prince Edward of England and Mary, the daughter of the Scottish queen; but if such was the case we know how differently the course of the young prince was afterwards directed. Encouraged by these promises of aid the indefatigable Margaret returned to England for the purpose of rescuing her husband, who was a prisoner in the Tower, and resuming the war against the Yorkists. In both attempts she was successful, for the Duke of York was defeated and slain at Wakefield, and Henry VI. was replaced for a short period upon his tottering throne.¹

The first outbreak against the public peace which occurred after the accession of James III., although noticed incidentally and only by one early writer,² as if it had been but a trivial circumstance, is too characteristic of the times to be omitted. Allan of Lorn of the Wood, a grim Highland chief, the nephew of Donald Balloch of the Isles, had imprisoned his own brother, John Ker of Lorn, with the purpose of putting him to death, that he might succeed to his possessions. Fortunately, however, Ker had a powerful ally in his cousin, Colin Campbell, Earl of Argyle, who raised his retainers and made an expedition to the island of Kerrera, to which the unnatural Allan had carried his brother captive. So sudden was the descent of the earl that Allan of Lorn was taken at unawares; his ships were burned, and most of his followers, to the number of eighty or a hundred, slain, while he escaped himself with difficulty, leaving his brother John in the hands of the conqueror, by whom he was restored to his lands and lordship. It was probably in consequence of this and similar outrages that the first parliament of James III. was held at Edinburgh soon after his coronation. As the Scottish parliamentary records of this and the following year are lost we can only state the proceedings of this meeting from the summary account of the contemporary chronicle. Besides the usual nobles and prelates, it was attended by the Earl of Ross and Lord of the Isles, and by several Highland and insular chiefs, to whom the rule of a minor or a season of anarchy was as welcome as the coming of harvest to the husbandman. "And they did little good in the foresaid parliament," the narrative proceeds to tell us, "but that they ordained sessions to sit first at Aberdeen, then in Perth, then in Edinburgh." Much

discontent, as might be expected, was also expressed at the influence of the queen-mother, "and they said that they were little good worth, both spiritual and temporal, that gave the keeping of the kinrick (realm) to a woman." The umbrage of such men speaks well for the efficiency of her regency. As soon as this parliament had ended the queen adopted decisive measures for the maintenance of public order by appointing new keepers to the royal castles of Edinburgh, Stirling, Blackness, and Dunbar.³

While Mary of Gueldres was thus anxious for the repose of Scotland she soon found herself once more involved in the troubled fortunes of Margaret of Anjou. The latter, chiefly through the aid of the warlike Borderers, Scotch and English, whom she had attracted to her banner, had defeated and killed the Duke of York at Wakefield, and replaced her husband Henry VI. upon the throne. But her triumph was ended in little more than two months, for Edward, son of the Duke of York, a more formidable rival than his father, rallied the Yorkists and gave the queen such a defeat at Towton as compelled her and her husband once more to take refuge in Scotland. On this occasion, also, their flight was so helpless that their arrival in Scotland was attended by only four men and a boy.⁴ The fugitives were hospitably received by the queen and Bishop Kennedy, and the old negotiation concerning the restitution of Berwick to the Scots appears to have been ratified personally by Henry himself as the price of Scottish assistance. He was willing to give them full command of the gate through which their aid could be most effectually sent, while the Scots were willing to risk the hazard of a war for the restoration of the old boundary of their national independence. This affair so satisfactory to both parties being settled, Margaret, leaving her peaceful husband to prosecute his studies and devotions in the monastery of the Gray Friars at Edinburgh, set sail from Kirkcudbright to the Continent to stir up its princes and the King of France in her behalf. Alarmed at these proceedings Edward IV., now King of England by his victory of Towton, endeavoured to disarm the Scots by finding them sufficient occupation with their own feuds and quarrels at home—a stroke of policy which his successors afterwards matured into such a regular and successful system. He therefore negotiated with the remains of the former parties whose league against James II. had well nigh overturned the Scottish throne—with the Earl of Douglas and his adherents, now the subjects and stipendiaries of

¹ *Auchinleck Chronicle*, p. 58; English histories.

² *Auchinleck Chronicle*, p. 58.

³ *Auchinleck Chronicle*, p. 59.

⁴ *Paston Letters*, vol. i. p. 249.

the English crown, with the Earl of Ross, with Donald Balloch, and the other northern satraps who had identified themselves with the fortunes of Ross and Douglas. With these Edward entered into a close league for the dethronement of the Stewarts and the conquest of Scotland by an army of islesmen and Englishmen, after which the kingdom was to be parted among these Scottish traitors, who were to hold their possessions as vassals of the English crown. This curious agreement was drawn up and dated at London on the 13th of February, 1462.¹ But while Edward IV. was thus negotiating with the old head of the Douglasses and his adherents, Henry VI. was in treaty with their new chief, the Earl of Angus, now warden of the marches, and the most powerful nobleman in Scotland. In this curious charter of agreement Henry granted to George, Earl of Angus, in consideration of the earl's assistance, certain lands between the Trent and the Humber, to the value of two thousand merks sterling of yearly rental; to erect these lands into a dukedom; to permit the earl to repair as often as he pleased to this dukedom, or into England, with a retinue in time of peace of one hundred horse; and in the event of war between the two kingdoms, to allow twenty-four armed men to reside on the dukedom, to collect the earl's rents and revenues.² These and other privileges, which would have made the new Douglasses more formidable to their sovereigns than the old, were as little likely to be realized as the more magnificent offers which Edward had made to their rivals, while the treaties of both kings alike were secret compacts not intended to meet the public eye.

The first of the contracting nobles pledged to Edward IV., who raised the standard of open rebellion, was Donald, Earl of Ross. Allured by the hope of becoming an independent sovereign of the isles as his ancestors had been, and impatient to merit the ample annual subsidy that had been promised by the English king, he mustered his warlike islesmen, proclaimed himself King of the Hebrides, and having taken the royal castle of Inverness by surprise, descended upon Athole with such rapidity that the earl of Athole and his lady, once the Fair Maid of Galloway, were obliged to fly from their castle of Blair and take shelter within the church of St. Bride, hoping that its sanctuary would be a sure defence. Thither also they were followed by the chief inhabitants of Athole, who were glad to escape from the fierce invaders, carrying along with them the most valuable of their pro-

perty. But these islanders had shown in their late wars that they respected a church even less than an ordinary building, while the wealth which the sacred edifice contained only tempted their cupidity and provoked their love of bloodshed. They quickly stormed the church of St. Bride, plundered it of its wealth, and after dragging the earl and countess from the horns of the altar, carried them off as prisoners to the island of Islay. But this, which was only meant for the commencement of the expedition, was also its close. For their spoiling of churches and sanctuaries as if they had been ordinary dwelling-places, the Earl of Ross and his companions, we are told, were struck by the hand of God with sudden madness, and the greater part of their ships, with the rich plunder they contained, were overwhelmed and sunk by the tempests. Humbled by these tokens of divine wrath the Earl of Ross on landing set his noble prisoners free, and with his company returned to the violated church of St. Bride, to do penance for his deeds of sacrilege; "but they were nothing the better," adds the reverend historian, who seems to exult in their punishment. The island lord, indeed, recovered his health and understanding a short time afterwards; but it was only to undergo the last instalment of his retribution, for he was assassinated in the castle of Inverness by an Irish harper, "as a due punishment for his wickedness."³

While this dangerous conspiracy was so prematurely hurried into action and so easily terminated, Margaret of Anjou was actively employed upon the Continent for the purpose of seconding the expected Scottish invasion of England with foreign auxiliaries. It was evident, indeed, that without such co-operation an inroad from Scotland would have armed the English at large against it as a renewal of the old national quarrel. Margaret's first application was to the Duke of Bretagne, who instead of an army lent her twelve thousand crowns; she next applied to her father, René, King of Naples, Sicily, and Jerusalem, who had neither men nor money to give. Her chief and final hope was in the court of France; but the crafty, selfish, and parsimonious Louis XI. received her moving appeals with a sympathetic countenance and impenetrable heart until she offered to surrender Calais, the last hold of England upon France, even as she had agreed to relinquish Berwick, the only relic of the English conquest of Scotland. Louis then suffered himself to be persuaded; but cautious and greedy to the last, he would furnish nothing more than twenty thousand crowns, and two thousand

¹ *Rotuli Scotiæ*, ii. p. 407.

² Godscroft's *Douglasses*, &c., ii. pp. 21, 22.

³ Lesley's *Historie of Scotland*, p. 34; Buchanan.

men under the command of Peter de Brezé, Seneschal of Normandy, most of the soldiers being raised at the seneschal's own expense. With this little armament she landed near Bamborough, but was disappointed to find that neither a Scottish army nor English reinforcements were ready to come to her aid. As instant action was necessary the queen took and garrisoned the fortresses of Alnwick and Dunstanborough; but the sudden advance of Edward IV., accompanied by the formidable Earl of Warwick and a large force, compelled the queen and de Brezé to fall back upon their shipping and hoist sail. The small fleet was dispersed by a storm; Margaret, after being driven into Berwick, was compelled once more to retire to the Continent, while the seneschal with difficulty escaped to Holy Island in a fishing-boat. All that the Earl of Angus, upon whom the queen had relied, was able to perform in this ill-fated expedition appears to have been bravely and faithfully done, although it was of little avail to the Lancastrian interests. De Brezé, on his capture of Alnwick, had garrisoned it with a portion of his troops under the command of his son, and these Angus brought off in safety in the face of an English army by whom they were about to be overpowered.¹

As the adherence of the royal family of Scotland to the house of Lancaster was of great weight in the scale at a time when the Lancastrians and Yorkists were of themselves almost equally balanced, a new device was adopted by the latter party to detach Scotland from the cause of their enemies. This was to be effected by a peaceful matrimonial negotiation instead of a civil war, while the parties to be espoused as the pledge of national agreement were none other than Edward IV., the handsomest man of his age, but still a youthful bachelor, and Mary of Gueldres, as yet in the prime of life and beauty. The ambassador of Edward on this occasion was the brave, powerful, and politic Earl of Warwick, a personage not to be employed on light or frivolous errands. The notices connected with this startling project are equally brief and obscure; but from these it appears that Warwick met Mary at Dumfries, and that such a union was the subject of treaty.² That Mary would have rejected such a husband is scarcely probable, but whether the fickle Edward was in earnest is more than doubtful. The character of the Scottish queen also had been tainted by evil rumours against her chastity both in England and Scotland, but the truth or falsehood of these it is now im-

possible to ascertain. It is possible, however, that the overture of marriage was nothing more than a prelude on the part of England to that treaty of alliance between the two countries by which Edward would have been secured in his throne against any interference from Scotland. The death of the queen, which occurred on the 16th of November, 1463, followed so closely after this matrimonial proposal that it has been suspected by some that its failure may have hastened her demise. Of her high spirit and love of her adopted country and its liberties she gave striking proof by her conduct at Roxburgh; while her charity was evinced in the fashion of the age by the erection and endowment of the Queen's College, better known under the name of Trinity Church, in what was at that time a rural and picturesque site in the neighbourhood of Edinburgh.

The death of the queen was no interruption to the treaty of peace which had commenced between Scotland and England, and was successfully concluded at York by the commissioners of both kingdoms. It was agreed on this occasion that there should be a truce between the countries for fifteen years; that the Scots in the meantime should give no aid to Henry VI., his queen, his son, or their supporters, while Edward IV. on his part was to abandon the pretensions of the Earl of Douglas, but that both the deposed king and banished earl were in the meantime to remain undisturbed in their respective asylums.³ The still continuing difficulty of establishing anything like a lasting concord between the two nations was at this period strikingly manifested. The Duke of Albany, second son of the late King of Scotland, who had been sent by his mother to be educated at the court of Gueldres, was captured on his return by English cruisers although the truce had already commenced. At this insult the Scots were indignant, and they declared through Bishop Kennedy that the truce was at an end unless the young prince and the captured ships were instantly set free. With this message they also sent a herald to denounce war in regular form if these reasonable demands were refused. But the civil wars of England were not yet ended, and Edward, though he had been victorious in every encounter, had no chivalrous love of strife and adventure for their own sake to provoke a gratuitous encounter with Scotland. It is probable, therefore, that the collision at sea was excused as a mistake, while the prince himself and his convoy were instantly set at liberty.⁴

¹ Wyrcestre, p. 494; Harding, p. 228; *Leland Coll.* ii. 499.

² Rymer, xi. 510; Wyrcestre, 493; *Paston Letters*.

³ Rymer, xi. p. 517; Abercromby, ii. p. 390.

⁴ Lesley's *Historie of Scotland*, p. 36.

The hopes which King Henry may have entertained of Scottish aid were now at the lowest ebb. By the battle of Hexham, fought in May, 1464, his adherents in England were defeated with great loss, and their leaders killed on the field or executed on the scaffold. The death of the Earl of Angus, whose interest he had purchased with such a tempting price, extinguished all the hopes he had reposed upon this new leader of the formidable house of Douglas. Bishop Kennedy, the wise and patriotic director of Scottish affairs, was in no mood to involve the kingdom in a dangerous war merely to displace one Plantagenet on the throne of England by another, and the truce concluded at York left Henry nothing more in Scotland than a precarious home of which he now was probably weary. Impatient to be among his friends, he privately crossed the Border and managed to reside in safety among the moors of Lancashire and Westmoreland, where, either from contempt or compassion, no one could be found to refuse him shelter or to betray him. His departure ensured the continuance of the truce between the two countries, which his stay in Scotland might have endangered, and delivered the country from a deposed sovereign whose cause it could not have supported without disadvantage to itself. The rest of the short career of Henry VI. belongs exclusively to English history. About a year after the battle of Hexham he was found lurking in Yorkshire and conveyed to his residence in the Tower, where he lay apparently forgot by all parties until the favour of Warwick, the great king-maker, restored him, in name at least, to the sovereignty. But the victories of Edward IV. at Barnet and Tewksbury once more threw the crowned puppet into prison, which he only exchanged for the grave. His final suppression, with the murder of his son, Prince Edward, and the banishment of Margaret of Anjou, terminated that connection of Scotland with the wars of the Roses which might otherwise have led to such important results.

The condition of the kingdom at this time presented an aspect of unwonted tranquillity. A long truce was established with England which neither party had any motive to infringe; the relationships of Scotland with foreign powers were of a friendly character; her trade was flourishing, and her national independence as fully established as at any period of her previous history. But all these advantages only furnished a more effectual field for the intrigues and quarrels of the Scottish nobles, which were now to constitute the principal feature of the present reign. And for these, indeed, which were ready to occur under any circumstances,

the present period was particularly tempting. The king, a minor, was as yet only thirteen years old. The overwhelming power of the Douglasses, that would suffer no despotism but their own, was temporarily suppressed by the banishment of one earl and the death of another, while the heir of Angus was still in his minority. The able Kennedy, also, whose energetic character had hitherto been in the ascendancy, was now worn out with years and ready to enter into his rest. Such a clear arena was not likely to want combatants, and the question of contest was what man or faction was to occupy the leadership of Scottish affairs and the government of the young king. This was settled in behalf of the Boyds, a family hitherto little noticed, but whose head, Lord Robert Boyd, had been raised to the peerage a few years previous. That a family of inferior influence should be placed so near the person of James III. as least likely to abuse their trust may have appeared to Kennedy a wise precaution, but in this case he must have forgot the example of the Livingstons during the minority of James' father. But the most distinguished member of the family was Sir Alexander Boyd, the brother of Lord Robert, a man so noted for his graceful manners and surpassing excellence in all knightly accomplishments that the bishop and queen-mother had naturally selected him as the best tutor for the young sovereign in the chivalrous education of the period.¹ In this way the peer and the knight obtained joint possession of the king, and to make it available for their ambitious purposes it was necessary that they should have powerful confederates on whose co-operation they could depend. This they settled in the usual way by a bond of alliance with several of their brother nobles, the most powerful in Scotland, in which the parties agreed to stand by each other with kith, kin, and resources against all and sundry who should oppose them. By this indenture the royal person was to be retained in the keeping of Sir Alexander Boyd and Gilbert Lord Kennedy, the bishop's elder brother, and the privileges and immunities by which their supporters were to be rewarded are distinctly specified. It was a most selfish compact, in which the personal advantages of the parties themselves formed not only the sole motive, but was specially and unblushingly avowed. As if to make such a union of villany also of double and treble security by the sanctions of religion, it was solemnly sworn by the subscribers laying their hands on the holy gospels.² This indenture, drawn up at Stirling and dated the 10th

¹ Buchanan, b. xii. 21; *Paston Letters*, i. p. 270.

² Tytler's *History of Scotland*, vol. iv. Appendix, letter G.

of February, 1465, was no anomaly of the period; on the contrary it was such a document as repeatedly figured during the intervals of royal minorities and misrule, and it is to be feared that the old charter-chests of Scotland could furnish too many parallel instances.

It was well for Bishop Kennedy that his life was ended before this dark conspiracy, of which he probably was ignorant, had broken out into open action. He died on the 10th of May, 1466. Being connected with the royal family through his mother Mary, Countess of Angus, a daughter of Robert III., it was natural that he should take a high place in the government and be the staunch adherent of his sovereigns, James II. and James III. We have already seen how effectually he tended by his wise counsels to break the dangerous power of the Earl of Douglas and dissolve the league which the latter had formed against the throne. The same energy and prudence distinguished his political administration during the present reign, so that the minority of James III. had hitherto been a season of unwonted prosperity and peace. But it was not merely as the wisest and best Scottish statesman of the period that the public life of the bishop was signalized; for he was also the liberal promoter of learning and civilization, which he attested by building and richly endowing St. Salvator's College at St. Andrews. As a churchman and prelate he appears to have been indefatigable, causing the clergy to reside in their parochial charges for the instruction of their people, and visiting himself every church in his diocese four times in the year, preaching in each of them, and taking a strict account of the diligence of their pastors and the manner in which their duties were discharged. But this was not all, for perceiving the abuses that had entered among the clergy, he was earnest for their reformation, and on this account made two journeys to Italy. While his own style of living was simple and moderate, his liberality in the erection and adornment of churches was upon a princely scale; and his three principal structures—St. Salvator's College, his own tomb which he built within it, and a large ship called the Bishop's Barge—each of these being of equal cost, give an almost incredible idea of his wealth, as he is said to have expended upon each about ten thousand pounds sterling, equal to more than twelve times that amount of modern money. If this statement is to be received we can only suppose that such wealth possessed by a Scottish prelate of the period must have been chiefly derived from merchandise, and that his barge was built for this purpose rather than useless ostentation. Buchanan, who was no enthusiastic panegyrist either of kings or prelates, after

commending his eminent virtues and proclaiming him the best of all the bishops who had ever held the see of St. Andrews, thus concludes the account of his character:—"His death only made his virtues appear the more illustrious and the love of him more intense; for when he who was a perpetual censor of morals was removed from the community, the public discipline began first to grow weak and remiss, and afterwards so corrupt as to bring almost everything to ruin along with his departure."¹

As if they had waited for the event the decease of Bishop Kennedy was the signal to the Boyds for action; and while the young king, who had now completed his fourteenth year, was sitting in the Exchequer Court at Linlithgow, Lord Boyd, accompanied by his adherents, Lord Sommerville, Adam Hepburn the Master of Hailes, and Andrew Kerr of Cessford, entered the court, laid hands upon James, and compelled him to mount on horseback behind one of the officers of the exchequer, that he might be conveyed to Edinburgh. No opposition appears to have been offered to this act of violence except by Lord Kennedy; but as he was one of the chief persons in the late compact with the Boyds his opposition could be nothing more than a feint to secure himself from punishment should the seizure of the king's person be afterwards called in question. The aged nobleman seized the horse's bridle and entreated James not to pass forth with the traitors; but Sir Alexander Boyd, after reproaching Kennedy for his interference, struck him on the head with his hunting-staff and made him let go his hold. After this well-acted scene of dissimulation the king was carried to Edinburgh, where he was wholly under the influence of the Boyds and his accomplished ingratiating tutor, Sir Alexander. And here another solemn farce was to be acted. While the parliament was sitting at Edinburgh Lord Boyd suddenly appeared before it, threw himself at the feet of James, and adjured the royal boy to declare whether he had not come to Edinburgh of his own free-will rather than by compulsion. Having been previously tutored for the purpose, James declared that no compulsion had been used, and that his coming was wholly voluntary. This was only enough for the present; and to secure themselves in all time coming the Boyds obtained an instrument under the great seal, declaratory of their innocence, and absolving them from question or punishment.² But this was not all, for the three estates, either won over by the coalition or

¹ Mair, p. 328; Pitscottie, p. 170; Lesley, p. 37; Buchanan.

² Buchanan, l. xii. 22; Crawford's *Officers of State*, p. 316; Appendix to Crawford's *Officers of State*, p. 473.

dreading its power, invested Lord Boyd with the guardianship of the king's person and that of his two royal brothers the Duke of Albany and the Earl of Mar, and the custody of the royal castles.

The other enactments of this parliament require only a brief mention. Beginning as usual with the church its established privileges were ratified; but several regulations were made to repress the growing avarice of the clergy in pensions and commendams. The old statute of Robert Bruce was also repeated, forbidding benefices in Scotland, whether secular or religious, to be held by Englishmen. For the preservation of the public tranquillity severe fines were imposed upon the *borrows* or pledges of such persons as had been obliged to give security to keep the peace with their neighbours, but who should be guilty of breaking the compact. If such an outbreak was made upon any bishop, earl, or lord of parliament, the offender who had broken his borrows was to be fined a hundred pounds; if it was committed against barons, knights, squires, or beneficed clergymen, the fine was to be fifty pounds; and if against burgesses, yeomen, or common priests, thirty pounds.

After these stringent regulations, which serve to show how frequently the public peace was disturbed, the mercantile and commercial condition of the country occupied the attention of parliament; but its legislation on this department showed how little the real interests of the community were as yet understood. To keep what little money existed within the kingdom, no person was to send money out of it, or take more with him than what was necessary for his personal expenses, under a forfeiture of the sum so deported and ten pounds more. But for the purpose of bringing money into the kingdom it was also enacted that every merchant exporting hides or woelfels should for every sack bring back to the royal mint two ounces of silver, for which he should receive nine shillings and twopence. The right of foreign traffic, instead of being free to all, was confined within narrow limits, so that no handicraftsman or artisan might engage in it without first renouncing his craft, and no person whatever unless he possessed property to a certain amount. Those to whom the privilege was restricted were the freemen of burghs, with their factors and servants, and also bishops, lords, barons, and the higher clergy, who might employ their servants and agents. The same overscrupulous caution was extended to the mode in which the traffic was to be conducted. No ship was to be freighted without a strict agreement drawn up between the skipper and the merchant respecting the manning, victualling, and navigating the

ship; no vessel was to sail during the winter months; and none was to be freighted to certain prohibited ports of Flanders, but to unlade only at Middleburg. If the Scottish aristocracy had sought to perpetuate their influence by preventing the growth of a middle class they could scarcely have fallen upon better expedients. The subject of coinage also employed the consideration of this parliament; and the value of Scottish money was to be a third of that of England; so that the Scottish silver penny became an almost invisible coin that could no longer be broken into halves and quarters as formerly. But for the benefit of the poor, billon farthings, composed of copper mixed with a little silver, were now introduced for the first time into the coinage of Scotland.¹

But more important at the period than these narrow commercial regulations were the proceedings of the Boyds, to whom the path of ambition was fully opened, and who advanced upon it with a confident step. The king, and with himself the whole of the royal family, were under their control; the royal castles were in their keeping, and the chief offices in the state were held by their clients and supporters. Nothing was wanting but a close relationship with the crown itself, and this they were able to effect by espousing the Princess Mary, eldest sister of the king, to Sir Thomas, the son of Lord Boyd. A very different destination had been contemplated for the young bride, who had been affianced to Edward, Prince of Wales, the son of Henry VI.; but to raise her Scottish husband to princely rank and make him more worthy of his royal mate Sir Thomas Boyd was made Earl of Arran and Constable of Scotland, besides being invested with large estates in Bute, Ayr, and other counties. The marriage of the young king himself was the next subject of consideration; and the only question was the court or country that might make such an alliance the most beneficial for Scotland. There were circumstances at this time which pointed out the kingdom of Denmark as the fittest for such a purpose, and to its court an embassy was accordingly sent to negotiate a marriage between James III. and one of its princesses. The Scottish commissioners appointed on the occasion were the Bishops of Glasgow and Orkney, the chancellor Evandale, Mr. Martin Vans, the king's almoner and confessor—and the most important of them all, the new-made Earl of Arran. To furnish them for the expenses of such a journey the three estates of parliament bestowed upon them a free-will contribution of three thousand pounds. Their commission did

¹ *Acts of the Parliament of Scotland*, ii. pp. 85-87.

not limit them to the court of Copenhagen; for, in the event of failure in that quarter, they were also permitted to try successively those of England, France, and Spain, of Savoy, Brittany, and Burgundy. Thus providently was care taken that the ambassadors should not set out upon a hopeless or even difficult mission.¹

The cause that directed such an embassy in the first instance to Denmark was one of national importance. The islands of Orkney had been conquered and colonized by the Norwegians so early as the ninth century; but although the kings of Norway from the period of the reign of Alexander III. had renounced the sovereignty of these islands, the earls of Orkney and their Norse population had recognized no feudal superior except the Norwegian sovereign. The annexation of Norway to Denmark towards the close of the fourteenth century only transferred this recognition to the latter country, and the Sinclairs, who succeeded to the earldom of Orkney, were considered to hold their delegated rule over these islands not so much through the grant of the Scottish crown as the grace of the Danish king, who might at pleasure reduce their authority to a mere empty title. As might easily be supposed this neutral condition of these islands had long been a source of annoyance to the Scottish kings. Geographically they formed part of the kingdom of Scotland, and according to tradition they had existed as a recognized portion of it until they were seized by the Norse invaders. But besides the national honour, which was involved in their recovery, it was necessary for the welfare of Scotland that they should be restored to the national rule, so that they might no longer be the haunts of pirates and shelters of conspirators and malcontents. When, therefore, the Western Islands had been ceded to Alexander III. in 1266 this king had consented to the perpetual payment of a yearly sum of a hundred marks in requital, even though this trifling sum was regarded by his subjects in the odious light of a tribute. But even its trifling amount, it may be, as well as the unsettled state of Scottish affairs, had caused the due payment to be neglected; and these omissions had been so frequent, that in 1457 they had amounted to an aggregate of four thousand marks. But this was the least part of the evil; for by the original treaty every case of failure in the payment of this tax, called the Annual of Norway, involved a penalty of ten thousand marks, and thus the forty years over which these omissions had extended had now accumulated to a sum equal to about eleven millions sterling of modern currency.

It was time to demand a settlement of accounts, or at least to decide whose property these islands should be accounted; and the subject was accordingly introduced by Christiern I., sovereign of the united kingdoms of Denmark, Norway, and Sweden—a king to whom not only these claims had descended, but who had ample opportunity and power to enforce them. He applied therefore to James II. for payment in full, not only of the discontinued annuals, but the forfeitures attached to them—and we can well imagine the overwhelming effect which the mention of such a sum must have produced upon the Scottish king and council—their dogged resolution not to pay it—their devices to escape from it. The question was referred to the arbitration of the King of France, the mutual friend of James and Christiern, and before him accordingly the ambassadors of Denmark and Scotland appeared in 1460 to state their respective demands. Several flaws were urged by the Scottish envoys, and among these was the assertion that the treaty on their part had been only neglected, not broken, and that Denmark itself had abandoned the claim by ceasing to demand the payment of the annual. The King of France wisely advised a compromise, the basis of which should be a marriage between the young heir of the Scottish crown and the daughter of the Danish king; and to this the Scots were willing to assent if Christiern would remit his pecuniary demands, renounce his claims to the Orkneys and Shetlands, and pay an hundred thousand crowns as the portion of the bride. But while the Danish court was deliberating upon the proposal James II. was slain, and in consequence of the troubles which followed, Christiern found it necessary to refresh the memories of the Scottish regency by repeating his demands in 1466 for the payment of the Annual of Norway. It was for the final adjustment of this demand by a renewal of the negotiation carried on at the French court six years before, that the matrimonial embassy was now sent from Scotland to Copenhagen.

It was well for the settlement of this difficult question that Christiern was a lover of peace, and better still, that the abandonment of his claims upon the Scottish islands could occasion little sacrifice. They were too remote from the seat of government to be easily ruled and too unproductive to be profitably retained; his sway over them was little more than nominal, and any exertion of authority over them was liable to involve him in a quarrel with the Scottish court. His alliance also with France against England suggested the expediency of a good understanding with the Scots by conceding to them those possessions, which, though valueless

¹ *Acts of the Parliament of Scotland*, ii. p. 90.

to himself, were of great national importance to Scotland. The treaty, therefore, was brought to a close upon conditions that were agreeable to both parties alike. The chief of these were, that in consequence of the marriage of the Danish princess to James III. the arrears of the annual sum arising from the Western Islands should be remitted, and all the accumulated penalties of non-payment cancelled, and that no future payment should be demanded from the King and Queen of Scotland, their heirs, and children. Christiern agreed to pay with his daughter a portion of sixty thousand florins, of which ten thousand were to be delivered before she left Denmark, while the islands of Orkney were to be given up in pledge for the payment of the remaining fifty thousand until they could be redeemed either by himself or his successors. On the other hand it was agreed by the Scottish ambassadors in the name of their master, that his bride, Margaret of Denmark, should in the event of his death be confirmed in possession of the palace of Linlithgow and the castle of Doune in Menteith, with their territories, and in a revenue of one-third of the royal income. It was also agreed that if the queen should in widowhood be desirous of leaving Scotland she should, instead of this provision, accept one hundred and twenty thousand florins, of which fifty thousand should be considered as paid upon the redeliverance of the Orkneys by Scotland to the Danish crown, provided that the queen did not marry any Englishman of whatever rank. This sum of only ten thousand florins on hand, and five times that amount in the form of a future and uncertain contingency, was a great abatement in the amount of the dowry upon which the Scottish negotiation had fixed in Paris. But even these ten thousand florins Christiern was unable to pay, in consequence of his expenses in the acquisition of Schleswick and Holstein, and the suppression of revolts in Sweden; and in consequence of this delay the Earl of Arran returned to Scotland to report the terms of the marriage alliance to James and receive his instructions for the conveyance of the royal bride to her new home. But, in consequence of the northern winter setting in upon the Baltic with its usual fierceness, it was resolved to delay her voyage till spring, and when that season had arrived Arran returned to Denmark with a noble train for the purpose of escorting Margaret to Scotland. Still Christiern had been unable to muster the scanty moiety which was to be paid before her departure in consequence of the Swedish troubles, and in this strait he offered to pledge the Shetland islands in the same manner as he had done those of Orkney for eight thousand florins.

This tempting offer was instantly accepted; and as the money was never paid the Orkneys and Shetlands from that period were united to the Scottish kingdom.¹

During the course of this embassy an undercurrent had been at work both in Scotland and Denmark by which the power of the Boyds was to be overthrown. Their elevation so greatly beyond their original rank and means, their usurpation of the chief offices in the kingdom, the undue manner in which they had exercised their guardianship over the royal family by procuring the marriage of one of its princesses to a son of the old lord, and the arrogance with which they maintained their advantages over men of higher rank and nobler lineage than their own, were certain to produce a speedy reaction of hatred, envy, and hostility not only among their enemies, but even their allies and supporters; and in that selfish spirit of union with which they had banded to support Lord Boyd these magnates had now combined and subscribed for their downfall. James also, no longer a passive boy but about to become a bridegroom, and impatient to be a king in reality, was easily induced to join a coalition that would free him from the tutorship of these upstarts. At the court of Copenhagen it could not have been otherwise than that Arran, a new man, should excite the attention both of king and court, and that Christiern, on learning of the ascendancy of the Boyds in Scotland, should set himself against a family whose influence was likely to be pernicious to the interests of his future son-in-law, and consequently to those of his own daughter also. It may be, likewise, that the wrath of James, who was a lover of money, and of his courtiers, who never could have enough of it, was aggravated by the pecuniary part of this Danish negotiation, by which only two thousand florins would be brought within their reach instead of sixty thousand, as had been originally promised. Thus all was in readiness for the ruin of the Boyds, and it needed but a spark to produce the explosion. While matters were in this state the fleet, bringing the fair bride and the Scottish ambassadors, had entered the Forth; and Arran, on stepping ashore, would have found himself among enemies who had decreed his death had it not been for the loving devotedness of his wife, the king's sister, who secretly conveyed herself to his ship and warned him of his danger. His heart quailed at the tidings, so that instead of venturing to land he hoisted sail and with his wife escaped to Denmark.²

¹ *Torfæus. Hist. Orcad.*

² *Ferrarius, p. 387; Lesley, p. 38.*

This flight served as the signal for open action both to the Boyds and their enemies; and on a parliament being assembled at Edinburgh in November, 1469, at which the old lord, his brother, and Arran were cited to appear and answer the charges that were to be brought against them, Lord Boyd advanced at the summons, not, however, in the fashion of an accused person ready to prove his innocence, but with all the armed followers he could muster and ready for the assize of battle. This attempt to overawe the parliament was as imbecile as it was insolent; for at the first flutter of the royal banner that was raised against him his followers forsook him and he was glad to fly across the Border into Northumberland, where he soon after died unpitied and unnoticed. A different fate awaited his brother, Sir Alexander Boyd, that gallant and accomplished knight who had been the king's tutor in martial exercises and the ornament of the Scottish court. The love and admiration of James had now been changed into an equally intense hatred; the high endowments of the culprit were little likely to find favour in the eyes of his judges, who were only rebuked by his superiority; and he was tried as a traitor for his share in the abduction of the king three years previous from Linlithgow. Although he pleaded the act of parliament passed immediately after, justifying all that had been done, the appeal was in vain and he was condemned and beheaded. Lord Boyd and the Earl of Arran, although absent, were also tried upon the same charge, sentence of death was recorded against them, and their extensive estates and fair castles were forfeited to the crown.¹

Amidst this sudden wreck of so distinguished a family the fate of Thomas Boyd, Earl of Arran, should not be passed over without notice. We have already mentioned the affection of his wife, who adhered to him when the world had forsaken him; who stole out to his ship in disguise to warn him of the danger that awaited him on shore, and readily consented to be the companion of his flight and exile. They first proceeded to Denmark; but there the earl, as the proclaimed enemy of the King of Scots, could expect neither safety nor welcome. They then repaired to France, whose king interposed with James in their behalf, but in vain, upon which they removed themselves to the dominions of Charles the Bold, Duke of Burgundy, where the earl was received with high favour, while his countess remained at Antwerp. Here she was urged by letters from her brother, the King of Scotland, filled both with promises and

threatenings, to persuade her to return; but, says the affectionate poet of Hawthornden, who could well appreciate her character, "these at the first prevailed nothing with this lady to make her forsake the husband of her youth. Many letters, and from several friends and well-wishers, in several fashions and styles, coming to her, at last she was brought to believe her presence would mollify the mind of her enemies and work her husband a re-establishment of his former favours with the king, her brother, and restore him to all his possessions and dignities." She returned accordingly, but a very different fate awaited her, for she was shut up in a sort of honourable imprisonment in the castle of Kilmarnock, which had belonged to her husband's family; the earl himself was then summoned to return within sixty days to Scotland "to adhere to his wife, under pain of divorce;" and as this was impossible the sentence of divorce was pronounced, although the countess had already borne two children to her husband at Antwerp. What followed was still more iniquitous and cruel; for she was compelled to receive for her second husband Lord Hamilton, to whom, it was alleged, she had been promised fifteen years earlier in requital for his treacherously abandoning the cause of the Earl of Douglas, through which the latter was driven out of Scotland. By this union the family of Hamilton, hitherto of less account than that of the Boyds, acquired in the person of the bridegroom the earldom of Arran, and ultimately became the nearest in succession to the Scottish throne in the reign of Mary Stuart. In the meantime the bereaved exile, who was distinguished by high talents both in peace and war, had risen to eminence in the service of the Duke of Burgundy, by whom he was employed in negotiations with England; and while thus employed at London he is described in the *Paston Letters* as "the most courteous, gentlest, wisest, kindest, most companionable, freest, largest, and most bounteous knight"—as a "light, clever, well-spoken, fair archer; devoutest, most perfect, and truest to his lady, of knights." Such an account given of him before he was deprived of his devoted partner shows how worthy he was of her affection, and how little he had merited the hard measure of persecution which his enemies had meted out to him. It appears that he died soon after the divorce, so that some have attributed his death to grief in consequence of the bereavement; and the Duke of Burgundy, by whom he was honoured and beloved, erected a splendid tomb to his memory at Antwerp, where he died.²

¹ Crawford's *Officers of State*, p. 316, quotation of the original trial; Buchanan, xii. 29.
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² Drummond of Hawthornden, pp. 129-130; Buchanan, xii. 30; *Paston Letters*.

From this episode we return to the course of public events. Margaret of Denmark arrived at Leith on the 10th of July (1469). She was only in the sixteenth year of her age; but besides the personal beauty by which she was distinguished, the charm of her manners, her virtuous example, and her piety have been affectionately eulogized by our early historians. In her train were several of the nobles and prelates of Denmark, and she was welcomed with cordiality by her young husband, who was only by two years her senior. The nuptials were soon afterwards celebrated at Holyrood, and with a splendour unwonted for Scotland,¹ while James, although still so young, was considered to have arrived at the age of majority and be capable of managing the affairs of his kingdom. And seldom had a reign commenced in Scotland under such favourable auspices. Berwick and Roxburgh had been recovered, and the restoration of the Scottish islands had rounded and completed the kingdom, so that all those portions hitherto so detached or doubtful were brought under the control of one sceptre. The land during the young sovereign's minority had been comparatively free from its wonted feuds and bloodshed as well as from its wars with England. A greater amount of the means of comfort and a higher degree of civilization were taking the place of that poverty and rudeness which had hitherto been the characteristics of Scottish life, and it seemed as if a new national career had commenced that would lead to prosperity and honour. Much, indeed, must depend upon the character of the young sovereign; but such a peaceful and promising inheritance as that to which he had now succeeded could scarcely demand the eminent warlike talents of the Bruce, or the varied political and legislative accomplishments of James I. To watch the prevailing current that had now set in, or even to allow it to go onward unchecked, seemed enough to ensure for the new sovereign a tranquil and prosperous reign. It was under such a favourable conjunction of events that James III. became, in reality as well as name, the sovereign of the kingdom.

It was not long before symptoms appeared sufficient to cloud these bright prospects and give warning of trouble and disaster. In the same parliament that met for the condemnation of the Boyds decrees were enacted which had for their object the arrest of the progress of the middle classes by the curtailment of their rights and privileges. Hitherto the election of aldermen (afterwards called provosts) had been a popular right of the burghs, and in choosing

their local rulers we can easily imagine that there had been sufficient canvassing and intrigue as well as bustle and clamour. Such were inevitable even in a better state of society, and the evil could be endured on account of the greater amount of good with which it was compensated. But of this right the burghers were now to be deprived, and, as the preamble of the act stated, "because of great trouble and contention yearly for the choosing of the same, through multitude and clamour of commons, simple persons." It was therefore decreed that the election of each new council should be made by the old, and that the old and new council conjointly should choose the alderman, bailies, dean of guild, and other town magistrates. By another act the parliament itself was degraded from its high place as the great national representative and classed along with the Justice-Ayre, Chamberlain's Ayre, "or such like courts," in proclaiming that there was no need to continue it from day to day, but that its enactments should still be in force as if it had been so continued. We can easily understand the dislike of the Scottish aristocracy to parliaments, where, instead of having the full sway, they only enjoyed a part of it, and that too, in some instances, of inferior amount. It is easy to imagine that these obnoxious statutes were carried by the influence of the same nobles who had condemned the Boyds and were impatient for confiscation and plunder, and that the young king, whose intense hatred of the whole family, and especially of his brother-in-law the Earl of Arran, had been gratified by their punishment, was easily induced to sanction those other measures by which the people were depressed and the ascendancy of the nobles confirmed.²

Other acts of the same parliament were of a more just and liberal character; and one of these concerned the right of sanctuary, which in Scotland as in other countries had grown to an intolerable height, but which in other countries was still allowed to go on unchecked. It was now declared that for the "eschewing of great slaughters which have been right common among the king's lieges now and of late, both of forethought felony and of suddenty; and because many persons commit slaughters upon forethought felony, in trust that they shall be defended through the immunity of holy kirk and girth," every homicide who fled to the sanctuary was at the demand of the sheriff to be brought and delivered to a trial of jury; and that if the crime was not accidental the murderer should be put to death according to law, the church in this case having no right to protect him. An-

¹ Mair, 328; Ferrerius, 389; Lesley, 37-38.

² *Acts of the Parliament of Scotland*, ii. pp. 95-97.

other provision regarding debtor and creditor was both just and merciful. When a nobleman or landlord fell into debt his poor tenants hitherto had been liable for the consequences, and on a writ called a brief of distress being issued the creditor could seize their property and drive them into destitution. But it was now decreed that the tenants should only be answerable to the amount of rent they owed and no more, and if this should be insufficient the creditor was to have recourse to the other goods and property of the landlord. Should the debtor also have no property except his land it was to be sold, "so that the inhabitants of the said lands be not hurt nor grieved for their lord's debts." Having thus secured the tenants from an oppressive and unjust responsibility, the statute is equally merciful in guarding as much as possible the family of the bankrupt from the consequences of his improvidence; and therefore he was allowed to redeem the estate within seven years on paying back to the buyer the sum that was paid for it and the additional expenses for charter, seisin, and infeftment. A severe statute was also levelled against sheriffs and unjust judges "who will not execute their office and minister justice to the poor people;" and full provision was made for their punishment, provided the "poor people" were bold enough to carry their appeal to the king and council, and that the law was strong enough to arrest them. Another enormity of these great ones against which an enactment was directed was of a more specific character and could be more easily redressed. It is stated that in the keeping of fairs, parliament times, and general councils—the chief seasons of public concourse and traffic—the great constables of castles, sheriffs, and bailies of boroughs "take great extortions of the king's poor lieges which they call their dues and fees." These consisted of an impost "on each load of flesh, fish, victuals, meal or malt, or such like burdens of fowls, on men's backs, and other things borne in men's hands, to the whilk they have no reason;" and those who persevered in the practice were henceforth to be punished in their persons at the king's will and be deposed for a year from their offices. By the foregoing concessions, so just in themselves but of such inferior import, the community was to be consoled for the deterioration of its parliaments and the extinction of its rights in the government of boroughs. On terminating their sittings the three estates committed full power to a committee consisting of four prelates, four barons, and four commissaries of boroughs, to deliberate upon certain measures which were to be brought before them in the following year.

These were the bringing in and retaining of bullion within the realm; the reduction of the king's laws, *Regiam Majestatem* acts, statutes, and other writings into an authorized volume, and the rest to be destroyed; and the reformation and punishment of perjury.

In the dearth of public events that immediately followed, we only know that the greater part of the nobility remained in Edinburgh with the king during the winter instead of returning, as they had been wont, to their castles and mansions. On the arrival of summer James and his young queen made a progress through the northern part of the kingdom, "where they were honourably received and entertained both in the principal cities and towns, and by the noblemen of the country, to the great comfort of the whole realm."¹ In these few words the history of the kingdom for a whole twelvemonth seems to be comprised. The only event which next arrests our notice is the meeting of parliament on the 6th of May, 1471; and some of its proceedings, as illustrative of the state of the country at this period, demand a passing notice.

It appears, that notwithstanding the bold restrictions laid by the last parliament upon the rights of sanctuary, they still continued to be abused; and that slaughters continued to be rife not only in districts possessing these privileged places of refuge but other parts of the country. To check these accordingly several restrictions were added, by which the escape of the criminal might be made more difficult, and his punishment more certain. But the new controversy of parliament with the church had not yet ended. The corruptions of the latter were gathering to a height at which nothing short of a total overthrow by a reformation could avail instead of mere corrective acts of parliament. In the present case, however, the three estates did what they could by specifying the offence and announcing the penalty. There was "great damage and scathe daily done to all the realm," it was stated, by the purchase at the court of Rome of abbacies and other benefices by priests both religious and secular, a traffic that had never been practised before, and through which a heavier taxation had been inflicted upon the Scottish church than it ever had hitherto suffered. Instead of such purchase, therefore, the free election to these benefices was to be continued according to former usage, and no greater or higher taxations were to be made for the papal treasury than those which had been fixed by the regulations of Bagimont. In this way the clergy were allowed to elect their own ecclesiastical superiors, while simoniacal practices were prohibited.

¹ Bishop Lesley's *Historie of Scotland*, p. 38.

But as if to show the hopelessness of such partial attempts, and the necessity of something stronger than mere lay statutes, James himself, not long after, was the first to break them by giving and selling benefices irrespective of, and even in direct opposition to, the rights of the clerical electors.

In the political transactions of this session it was resolved to send an embassy to the King of France and the Duke of Burgundy for the ostensible purpose of promoting such a spirit of concord between the two potentates as after events showed to be unattainable. But the real purpose of this movement appears to have been the disgrace of the unfortunate Earl of Arran at the court of Burgundy and the marriage of his unfortunate countess to Lord Hamilton—objects which James was disposed to prosecute with relentless determination. Although Scotland was now at peace this state of things was so unwonted that provision was wisely made for the national defence, and it was thought expedient by parliament to cause certain “carts of war” to be made for the purpose. These “carts” were evidently cannons, in the cautious use of which the Scots had learned such a costly lesson, and they were to be made “by prelates and barons after the faculty and power of the persons for the defence of the realm.” With these new and terrible engines the old weapons were not lost sight of; and no merchant was to bring spears into Scotland, or bowyer make them in the country, unless they were six ells in length, while those that fell short of the measure were to be escheated, and their importers or fabricators punished at the king’s will. It was also decreed that each yeoman who “could not deal with the bow” should be armed with a good axe, and with a target of leather “to resist the shot of England”—which target, it is encouragingly added, “is no cost but the value of a hide.” Every sheriff, steward, bailie, and other public officer was to hold weapon-shaws within the bounds of his jurisdiction; the butts were to be set up for archery, and the meetings for the popular sports of golf and football to be discountenanced. The latter was a most necessary precaution, for even in England, the land of good bowmen, the public village sports that allured the people from the butts had to be repressed with still greater severity.¹

In turning their attention to the promotion of the national prosperity a recommendation of this parliament in its beauty and unassuming simplicity is worth a hundred elaborate statutes. It shows that they already understood one of the hidden mines of the kingdom’s real wealth,

and were anxious to have it opened for general benefit. “The lords think it expedient for the common good of the realm, and the great increase of riches to be brought within the realm of other countries, that certain lords spiritual and temporal, and burghs cause, make, or get ships, busses, and other great pink boats, with nets and all abulyements pertaining thereto for fishing; and that the execution of this matter and the form and the number of the same be had at the continuation of this parliament.” It is melancholy to think how long the Scottish fisheries upon such an ample scale were delayed. Another instance of provident care was shown in a sharp sumptuary law—a species of legislation at this time common in England, and, indeed, throughout nearly the whole of Europe. After alluding to the great expenditure occasioned by the importation of silk into the kingdom, it was decreed that no man in time coming should wear silk in doublet, gown, or cloak, unless he was a knight, minstrel, or herald, or possessed land to the amount of a hundred pounds of yearly rental, under a penalty of ten pounds, and the confiscation of his silken clothing, which was to be given to the heralds or minstrels, unless it had been fabricated before this sitting of parliament. Of these trespasses the sheriff of every shire and the aldermen and bailies of boroughs were to take strict account and send the escheated raiment to the king. It was also decreed that the wives of those who fell short of the annual revenue of a hundred pounds should wear no silk in lining except on the collar or sleeves, under the same penalty.

While the Scottish parliament had been legislating for the rights of the church an incident was in progress which showed the need of such legislation—as well as how little it was likely to avail. It was a melancholy episode extending over a course of years; but the principal events of which we shall now briefly sum up in a continuous narrative, not only on account of its intrinsic importance, but its future bearing upon the religious history of the country.

As yet the prelates of Scotland had no ecclesiastical head; and by the death of Kennedy in the commencement of 1466 they were deprived of one whose noble birth, high character, and great political influence had naturally given him a leading power in the affairs of the church, which he had used for its best interests. On his death Patrick Graham, Bishop of Brechin, the uterine brother of Kennedy, and of similar virtues and endowments, was chosen by the canons to succeed him. On this election Graham resolved to repair to Rome for confirmation, but was opposed in this purpose by the Boyds, who were at feud with the Kennedies, and ruled

¹ *Acts of the Parliament of Scotland*, vol. ii. pp. 99, 100.

everything at court with a high hand. As in such a state of things it was in vain to wait for the young sovereign's leave of departure he privately left the kingdom, and on arriving at Rome he was cordially welcomed by Paul II.; "for, besides the nobility of his family and his high character for virtue, he was very learned according to the learning of the times." But although his appointment to the see of St. Andrews was confirmed he was unable to return to Scotland owing to the hostility of the Boyds. While he thus remained in exile the old claim of the archbishops of York to the superiority over the church of Scotland was revived by George Nevil, primate of the see, and carried before Sextus IV., the successor of Paul II., who gave a final decision in favour of the Scots, declaring it to be a thing unfitting that an English prelate should be primate of Scotland, "by reason of the wars that might break forth between the two kingdoms." But that Scotland should not in time coming be without a metropolitan the see of St. Andrews was erected into an archbishopric, and the rest of the bishops, twelve in number, were ordained to be subject to that see. In this manner Patrick Graham, the persecuted exile, unexpectedly became primate of Scotland; and to strengthen his authority the pope appointed him his legate for the space of three years, with commission to reform all abuses in the Scottish church and correct the immoralities of its clergy.

On learning of the downfall of the Boyds the new archbishop was eager to return home and commence the work of reformation. But even already it had become a dangerous and hopeless attempt; for the king by the advice of his courtiers had deprived the clergy of their right of election, that he might set the rich benefices to sale; and men of the worst characters were admitted into the church livings without examination on payment of the stipulated price. To announce his purpose and sound the inclinations of the people, Graham sent before him the papal bull appointing him legate, which he caused to be published in September, 1472. Its immediate effect was to arm all parties against him. The bishops were indignant at having a primate placed over them, the dissolute clergy and those who had purchased their livings were alarmed at his legatine authority, and the courtiers felt that their gainful traffic in church benefices would be visited with a sudden arrest. The hue and cry of rage and disappointment was carried to the palace in the shape of a formal complaint against the archbishop that he had accepted the office of legate from the pope without the royal permission, and that this was prohibited by the laws of the kingdom, and might be prejudicial to the king. James was easily

persuaded: an act of council was sent, as soon as Graham landed, prohibiting him from the exercise of his office as legate, and commanding him to appear for trial at Edinburgh on the first of November, to answer for the crime of having accepted such a charge. He appeared accordingly; but it was in vain that he showed his bulls, pleaded his commission for the reform of clerical abuses, and implored that he might not be hindered in his duty: his judges were also his enemies, and it is alleged that eleven thousand marks had been distributed among them to purchase his condemnation. In the hope of defeating his appointment, or at least of obtaining a delay which of itself was equal to a defeat, they interposed an appeal which was to be sent to the pope, showing reasons wherefore the bishop should not hold the office of legate; and in the meantime he was sent back to his former charge, and ordered not to assume the dress, style, or authority of an archbishop until the pope's answer had been given to their appeal.

A new enemy now appeared against the unfortunate prelate. This was William Schevez, a young man of great talents and subtle spirit, who had studied at Louvain under John Spernic, and acquired from his preceptor such a knowledge of physics and astrology as was certain to recommend him at the Scottish court. He was recommended by the king to Graham as a successor to the archdeaconry of St. Andrews, which had become vacant; but the bishop, who found that Schevez had wholly given himself to the study of arts prohibited by the canons, and was ignorant in theology, rejected the application. Indignant at this the subtle quack, star-gazer, and conjurer allied himself with John Locke, rector of the University of St. Andrews and an enemy of the bishop, to effect the prelate's downfall; and Locke, pretending that as rector of the college his jurisdiction was equal to that of Graham, had the hardihood to pronounce against the latter a sentence of excommunication. This sentence, coming from so inferior a quarter, the bishop treated with silent contempt. Even this forbearance, however, was magnified into a crime; the civil authority was invoked against him as a despiser of ecclesiastical censure; and he was prohibited from entering any sacred place, while his goods were confiscated, his attendants withdrawn from him, and other servants appointed, whose chief duty was to watch over him and enforce the prohibition; while, to show their gratitude at being rid of an ecclesiastical superior and censor, the bishops raised a large sum of money, which they extorted from the inferior clergy and presented to the king.

It was full time for the kith and kin of the

high-born but persecuted prelate to interpose, and had it been a merely civil feud we can easily imagine a banding together of Kennedies, Grahams, and even Stuarts, that would have gathered and hied to the rescue of their relative before matters had come to such extremity. But it was an ecclesiastical contest, for which, perhaps, they did not greatly care; while its chief weapon was money, which they may have been unable or unwilling to give. At last, however, they did what they could, and by a counter-bribe they so far prevailed upon the king that the bishop was relaxed from his restrictions, and allowed to retire to his chief seat at Monimail. But here he had scarcely well rested when his enemies were upon him with a new kind of persecution. Aware that the late sentence had reduced him to poverty, and that the large fees of the bull of privileges which he had obtained at Rome were still unpaid, they stirred up the collectors of the Romish taxes to harass him with their demands; and because he was unable to satisfy them he was excommunicated anew, his person was arrested, his rents uplifted by the king's officers, and he was placed under guard in his own castle of St. Andrews. The mind of the good man at last gave way under such a pressure, so that insanity ensued; but, unmoved by the calamity, or rather encouraged by his helplessness to complete their work, his enemies consigned him to the keeping of Schevez,

who of all men hated him the most, and whom they appointed his coadjutor in the see. Their next step was to send accusations of heresy against him to Rome, with Schevez for their bearer and prosecutor. Among the charges adduced one was, that he had thrice performed mass in one day—"while there could scarcely be found a bishop in that age," adds Buchanan, "who said it once in three months." From a tribunal that could gravely listen to such an accusation what justice could be expected? Graham was proclaimed guilty of schism, simony, heresy, and other crimes, and sentenced to lose his ecclesiastical dignity, and be condemned to perpetual imprisonment; while Schevez, his enemy and accuser, was appointed Archbishop of St. Andrews in his room.

His deposition and its attendant calamities he endured with meekness, for he appears to have fully recovered from his mental aberration. But still his enemies were not weary of persecuting, and his gentleness only inflamed their rage. They first put him into close prison upon the little island of Inchcolm, but on the breaking out of war with England this place was judged insecure from the apprehended visits of the English cruisers, and the bishop was removed to Dunfermline and afterwards to the castle of Lochleven, where he died and was buried, after he had held the mere title of his archbishopric for thirteen years.¹

CHAPTER VI.

REIGN OF JAMES III. (1472-1482).

Continuation of peace between England and Scotland—Attempts to engage Scotland in a continental war—Overtures of the King of France for the purpose—The design opposed by the parliament—Negotiation for a marriage between the infant son of James and a daughter of Edward IV.—Its amicable conditions—Its ratification—Edward IV. invades France—Measures of James III. to pacify the Highlands—Proceedings against the rebellious Earl of Ross—The earl compelled to submit—Peaceful proceedings of James—His studies and pursuits—Their offensiveness to his nobles—Low favourites of James—Contrast of his brothers the Duke of Albany and Earl of Mar—Jealousy of James against them—His suspicions fostered by superstitious arts and prophecies—He causes his brothers to be arrested and imprisoned—Dexterous escape of Albany from the castle of Edinburgh—Suspicious death of the Earl of Mar—Albany becomes rebel and traitor—Louis XI. incites the Scottish king against England—War with England commenced—Its indecisive proceedings—Treasonable compact of the Duke of Albany with the English king—Odium excited by Cochrane, the chief favourite of James—His arrogance and avarice—Mustering and march of the Scottish army against England—The nobles conspire at Lauder against the king's favourites—Their meeting and deliberations—Unexpected arrival of Cochrane among them—His ignominious treatment and arrest—The nobles arrest the other favourites—Summary execution of the favourites on Lauder Bridge—James III. conveyed to the castle of Edinburgh—Hostile advance of the Dukes of Gloucester and Albany into Scotland—Peaceful composition between the Scottish government and the dukes—Albany obtains the chief direction of affairs—Humiliating concessions exacted from James III.

Amidst these unhappy events which we have recorded in connection with the Scottish church the peace of the kingdom continued untroubled.

This was the more singular when we call to

¹ Buchanan, xii. 32-35; Spottiswood's *History of the Church of Scotland*, pp. 58-60; Hawthornden, pp. 131-136.

mind the eventful changes by which England had been agitated to its centre. The ejection and restoration of Edward IV., the murder of Henry VI. and his young son and heir, and the intrigues of the Lancastrians, who were still ready to rebel against the new Yorkist dynasty, were temptations any one of which, in former years, would have been eagerly seized by the Scots. But upon each and all of these occurrences they seem to have looked with calm tranquillity, so that the unsettled state of England does not seem to have produced even an ordinary Border inroad. The anomaly may be explained by the fact that Edward's cares were confined to his own establishment upon the throne; and that the Scots, having secured their old territories as well as ancient independence, had neither plea nor provocation for aggression. By only one occasion, indeed, this forbearance was threatened with interruption. Allusion has already been made to the costly ship built by Bishop Kennedy which was called the "Bishop's Barge." It was destined not for show but commerce; but in one of its voyages it was wrecked in 1472 off the coast of Bamborough, and the English made plunder of the merchandise with which it was freighted. Of the passengers, chiefly consisting of merchants and priests, the greater part were drowned; but a few who escaped in a boat were made prisoners when they reached the shore, and among them was the Abbot of St. Colm, who was obliged to pay a ransom of eighty pounds for his liberty. Instead of a war, however, this breach of truce produced only a remonstrance; while the English king caused five hundred marks to be paid as part of compensation to the Scots for their loss, with permission to sue in the English courts for the remainder.¹

But although there was peace with England attempts had been made to embark Scotland in all the danger of a continental war. The French king, Louis XI., was at variance with his powerful feudatory the Duke of Burgundy; and as the quarrel between these two potentates, both of whom were allies of the Scots, was likely to terminate in war, the party to which Scotland might adhere in such an event was a matter of great importance. It was natural, therefore, that Louis should endeavour to secure the old amity between France and Scotland in his own behalf; and it was in accordance with his usual policy to effect his purpose by crooked and indirect means. He had therefore sent his envoy, Concessault, a nobleman of Scottish origin, to James, instigating him to equip a fleet, engage

troops from Denmark, and attack Bretagne, promising, if it was conquered, to assign that rich duchy to the Scottish king. In this way both Scotland and Denmark would have been involved in behalf of Louis, and the promise which he held out cost him nothing, as it was certain that the Scots could never have retained their hold of Bretagne, which would have fallen into his own hands. Transparent though the deceitful offer was, James appears to have heartily closed with it; for notwithstanding his constitutional timidity and aversion to war, he loved money, and the dukedom was a tempting bait. A levy of six thousand men-at-arms was ordered, which he designed to lead in person across the sea; but where the shipping was to be obtained for the purpose, in a country so scantily provided with a navy as Scotland, James perhaps could as little guess as his cunning ally who had stirred him to the enterprise. But the question had not to await the ridicule of an attempt to solve it, for the parliament had taken the alarm, and both prelates and lords negatived the whole proposal. It was represented by the whole body of the clergy through the bishops that the king's departure upon such an expedition at so tender an age, and having as yet no child to succeed him, was highly inexpedient and dangerous, and that it was better to remain at home and be at peace with England than risk a renewal of the old war by his absence.² This was so early as 1471; but in 1473, when the purpose was still in agitation, the delivery of the whole parliament was still more express and decisive. In the event of his resolution to embark in the enterprise they drew up certain statements to show that it was impolitic and even impossible. They exposed to him the double-dealing of Louis, who had as yet failed to put him in possession of Saintonge, the county of his progenitors, and besought him to recall the letters he had sent to the French king; they advised him, instead of having recourse to arms, to send embassies to the courts of France and Burgundy for the purpose of mediating peace between them. By these peaceful negotiations also more might be effected than could be done by a war; for not only might these potentates be brought to accord in the delivery of Saintonge, but even of the dukedom of Gueldres, which was held to be now the inheritance of James through the traitorous conduct of its reigning sovereign, who had usurped the government by imprisoning his own father. Faint as was the prospect of James' succession to the inheritance of his grandfather, as well as of conquests on the Continent, these

¹ Lesley, p. 39; Rymer, xi. 850.

² *Acts of the Parliaments of Scotland*, ii. p. 102.

representations happily prevailed and all thought of the expedition was abandoned.¹

Another and a more hopeful negotiation with England succeeded. On the 14th of March, 1472, the young King of Scotland had been gladdened by the birth of a son, afterwards James IV.; and on this occasion Edward, who knew that the stability of his throne would be ensured and his popularity confirmed by an English reconquest of France, resolved to secure the neutrality of the Scots by proposing a matrimonial alliance between their infant prince and a daughter of his own family. The time had passed away when the conquest of Scotland was reckoned only the preface of an English invasion of France. The princess upon whom Edward fixed was his youngest daughter, Cecilia, and in October, 1474, the Scottish ambassadors who had been sent to England returned to Edinburgh, having in their company the Bishop of Durham, Lord Scrope, and two other English commissioners, to settle the final terms of this important union. These were that the truce of fifty-four years, extending to 1519, should remain in full force, and that during this period each king should assist the other against his rebels if required; that the prince and princess, during the life of the King of Scotland, should enjoy the usual heritage of the heirs-apparent of the Scottish crown, being the dukedom of Rothesay, the earldom of Carrick, and the lordship of the Stuart lands; and that Edward should give with his daughter a dowry of twenty thousand marks sterling, to be paid at the rate of two thousand annually, the first payment to be made on the 2d of February of the following year. Finally, it was also agreed that in the event of the death of the prince or princess the heir of the Scottish crown should marry an English princess, otherwise that all the sums received, with the exception of the first instalment of 2500 marks, should be repaid. It would have been a happy concord for the two kingdoms if such a marriage had been realized, and by the annual payment of a sum so large in the eyes of Scottish poverty a careful precaution was taken that the continuing peace should be something more than nominal. But besides that there were too many contending passions still alive to permit its complete realization, the contracted parties were so young that the bridegroom was only two and the bride four years old. Could the amity of two such kingdoms or the faith of the royal sponsors endure until the time of consummation? Whatever misgivings might have been felt on the subject, none were indicated, while the solem-

nities of betrothal were celebrated on the 26th of October in the Low Grayfriars' Church at Edinburgh; and there the high lords of England and Scotland pledged themselves for the completion of the marriage when the parties should have arrived at the proper age, and subscribed the conditions upon which it was contracted.²

This negotiation being amicably settled Edward IV. invaded France with an army judged sufficient to conquer the whole of that country and a military reputation that seemed to ensure success; but this formidable invasion Louis XI. contrived to defeat, not by force of arms, however, but by butts of wine and liberal pensions which were bestowed in abundance on the King of England and his chief nobility. During this ridiculous campaign James was more usefully employed in quelling the disturbances of the Highlands, which had now become too dangerous to be overlooked. The great offender on this occasion was John, Earl of Ross and Lord of the Isles, to whom Unicorn pursuivant was sent with a list of the charges brought against him, and commanding him to appear and answer them before the king and parliament. The charges, to the number of five, involved the crime of treason. 1. He had made treasonable leagues and bonds with Englishmen and with Edward, King of England. 2. He had held treasonable communing with that traitor Sir James of Douglas, sometime Earl of Douglas, and had given him treasonable help, counsel, favour, and supply. 3. He had treasonably given safe-conducts to our sovereign lord's enemies of England. 4. He had usurped our sovereign lord's authority in making his bastard son his lieutenant and investing him with authority to inflict capital execution upon the king's lieges who disobeyed him. 5. He had besieged the king's castle of Rothesay in Bute, and burned, slain, wasted, and destroyed our sovereign lord's lieges and lands upon that island. In these heavy charges we read the state of society in Scotland at this period, and the daring extremities to which its chiefs could carry the exercise of their authority. Fraught with the summons, Unicorn, who was also sheriff of Inverness, passed on the 14th of October (1475) to Dingwall, sounded his blast of notice and authority at the gate of the castle, and demanded entrance to the presence of John, Earl of Ross; but the gate remained shut and there was no voice or answer. It was time to pluck such a rebel from his stronghold, and after the parliament had proclaimed him traitor

¹ *Acts of the Parliaments of Scotland*, ii. pp. 103-104.

² Rymer's *Fæd.* vi. pp. 814-821.

³ *Acts of the Parliaments of Scotland*, ii. p. 109.

and confiscated his estates to the crown a formidable fleet and land force were collected to carry the sentence into effect. These earnest proceedings daunted the proud recusant, and by the advice of the Earl of Huntly, with whom he shared the greatest part of the Highlands, he resolved to submit to the king. This he did by appearing in person before James at Edinburgh, confessing his offences, and humbly craving forgiveness. He also resigned into the king's hands his earldom of Ross, the lands of Knapdale and Kintyre, and the hereditary sheriffdom of Nairn and Inverness, which were now annexed to the crown; but to reward the penitent his sentence of forfeiture was cancelled and he was created a peer of parliament with the title of Lord of Islay and the Isles.

James having now reached the age of twenty-five, the period of complete majority according to the civil law, proceeded to revoke all grants and alienations that might be prejudicial to the crown or his heirs, among which was the keeping of the royal castles, and especially those that were the keys of the kingdom. To Margaret of Denmark, his queen, he committed the keeping of their son, Prince James, with the castle of Edinburgh and an annual pension. He was also desirous to draw his alliance still closer with England by the marriage of his sister Margaret to the Duke of Clarence, and his brother, the Duke of Albany, to the Dowager Duchess of Burgundy, sister of Edward IV., and now a widow, by the death of her husband, Charles the Bold, at the battle of Nanci. But Edward was now established so firmly in his seat by the death of every competitor, that he no longer needed the forbearance of Scotland; and continually impoverished by his luxurious extravagance, he was weary of the yearly subsidy which he paid to Scotland as the marriage portion of his daughter. Already, indeed, the third instalment which he had paid of it this year (1477) was also to be the last. He therefore declined the offer of both the proposed marriages, but in friendly and courteous terms. A freak of superstition or a motive of policy having induced James to contemplate a pilgrimage to the shrine of St. John at Amiens, he desired a safe-conduct through England for that purpose, which Edward readily granted, and also expressed his desire for a personal conference with the Scottish king. But the journey was not undertaken, James contenting himself with striking a gold medal and sending it to the shrine as a substitute for his own appearance.¹

Thus far the present reign had been one of unwonted peace and prosperity: Scotland as a

kingdom was once more whole and entire, while the kingly rule extended without a rival to its farthest limits. But the storm was darkening under which the land was to be troubled and the king himself to be destroyed. The character of James had now attained maturity, and it was one with which neither his nobles nor people could sympathize. Instead of a public, active life, which his youth promised and the stirring habits of the age required, he immured himself within the recesses of his palace. Instead of caring for tilts and tournaments, for masques and pageants, he devoted his time and attention to the study of music, architecture, geometry, and astrology, pursuits unfit for a king at such a period; and we can easily imagine the scowl with which his iron-handed, steel-headed barons regarded his calculations and diagrams, or the looks of anxious interest with which he pored over them when he should have been in the saddle or at his council-board. These studies at the best they must have regarded as mere monkery, if not in some cases impious and damnable, and have turned away in disgust or contempt. No sympathy could exist between such a sovereign and the natural supporters of his throne, and James effectually widened the breach by selecting for his favourites and counsellors the men who excelled in the pursuits he so ruinously followed. The chief of these were Cochrane, an architect, who was contemptuously termed a mason; Rogers, an English master of music; and Ireland, a man well accomplished in the science and literature of the day. But with these were also associated persons of a lower grade and character, such as Leonard, a smith or armourer; Hommil, a tailor, and Torphichen, a fencing-master. While James was contented with such associates, and reserved for them his countenance and favour, his repelled nobility had no other resource than to betake themselves to more princely leaders and protectors; and these they soon found in the king's brothers, Alexander, Duke of Albany, and John, Earl of Mar. Of these Albany, the eldest, was of tall commanding stature, athletic form, and pleasing countenance; his retinue was correspondent to his personal dignity, being composed of men selected for their superior appearance and qualifications, upon whom he spared no expense; while he was both more loved and dreaded by the nobility than even the king himself. His younger brother, the Earl of Mar, added to these personal advantages a popular devotedness to hunting, hawking, and other princely sports; and great partiality for good horses, which he imported from abroad to improve the very inferior breed of those of his own country. It can easily be judged how disad-

¹ Rymer, xii. 53.

vantageously James must have shown contrasted with such brothers, and how insignificant his occupations must have appeared compared with their chivalrous accomplishments, splendid style of living, and love of stir and action. Nothing else could be the result than a divided court, with a preponderance in favour of the princes; and a continual contest, in which either they or the king and his worthless favourites must obtain the undisputed mastery.¹

When a quarrel among the brothers was so inevitable a cause was not long wanting for its commencement. The Duke of Albany, "for his singular wisdom and manhood," was appointed captain of Berwick and lieutenant of the Borders, and as Earl of March had the keeping of the castle of Dunbar and the enjoyment of the rents belonging to the earldom. But these high offices brought him into hostile contact with the powerful families of Home and Hepburn, whose estates lay upon his border. It is added by the old historian² whose account in these particulars we follow, that Home had many of the lands of the earldom of March in his hands; that he uplifted the rents of them by virtue of his office of chamberlain, with which he had been invested by James II.; and that he would not allow the tenants to transfer these payments to the duke, but wished to retain them in his own keeping. Albany, however, by the high offices he held upon the Border was too strong to be withstood, and he collected his rights in Border fashion at the head of his armed retainers. Unable to resist him, Home and Hepburn resolved to get the king on their side, and for this purpose they bribed Cochrane, the chief royal favourite, who readily entered into their measures; for he dreaded both Mar and Albany alike, and would gladly have accomplished their destruction. It was necessary, however, to proceed with caution, as the king still loved his brothers and trusted them, and therefore he had recourse to that weak credulity which formed a part of the royal character. A witch was easily found and tutored by the favourite, who prophesied to James that he should be suddenly slain by the nearest of his kin; and on being asked for the source of her information the crone declared that her familiar spirit had told her. One Andrews, a Flemish astrologer whom James entertained at his court, and acting also in all likelihood under Cochrane's instructions, deepened the king's impressions by foretelling that a lion would soon be devoured by its own whelps. Terrified by these predictions the superstitious king turned to his favour-

ites for counsel, and they easily persuaded him that his own brothers were the persons indicated as these future destroyers, of whom, therefore, he would do well to be on his guard. This solution was confirmed by Home and Hepburn, who had repaired to Edinburgh for the purpose of strengthening the conspiracy. Even when he turned to the church for advice he applied to the worthless Schevez, whom he had promoted for his skill in astrology and regarded as an oracle; and the primate assured him that the lion's whelps of the Fleming's prophecy could mean no others than Albany and Mar. It was in vain that another and a very different archbishop endeavoured to disabuse the mind of the distracted James. At this period Patrick Graham was a prisoner at Dunfermline previous to his removal to Lochleven; and hearing of his sovereign's distress, and the causes that had occasioned it, he hastened to warn him by letter of the worthless deceptions that had been practised against him. Such warnings, he said, arose from the father of lies and discord; that to seek to know things by the stars was great ignorance, and that oracles leave a man in a wilderness of folly; that there was no other difference betwixt necromancy and astrology saving that, in the one, men run voluntarily to the devil, and in the other ignorantly—and after similar suggestions he advised him to rest upon the Almighty's providence, and then all things would succeed well with him, and he would be wafted out of the surges of uncertainty.³ But these advices contained too much homely prudence for a devout believer in astrology; and James, with the usual infatuation of the superstitious, resolved by whatever means to avert a doom which he yet believed to be inevitable.

His first movement was to get the princes within his reach; and for this purpose he invited them to Edinburgh to take their place at the council board. They obeyed; and on their arrival were immediately imprisoned, Albany in the castle of Edinburgh, and Mar in the castle of Craigmillar. Having thus secured his brothers the next aim of James was to obtain possession of the strong castle of Dunbar, which was well garrisoned by the retainers of the Duke of Albany; and thither accordingly a royal army was sent under the command of Lord Evandale, the chancellor. With these forces was also sent a considerable train of those "carts of war" which the late edicts of parliament had ordered to be furnished and kept in readiness for the defence of the kingdom; but the castle of Dunbar was also well provided with cannons, which

¹ Ferrerius, p. 91; Buchanan, xii. 37; Pitscottie, 177.

² Pitscottie.]

³ Drummond, *History of Scotland*, pp. 135, 136.

also seem to have been used by the defenders with considerable skill. By a single shot from one of these pieces Colquhoun of Luss, Sir John Shaw of Sauchie, and Wallace, Laird of Craigie, three knights of great account in the royal army, were slain.¹ The defence was both long and obstinate; but, weary at last with resistance and unable to hold out any longer, the garrison betook themselves to their vessels and escaped by sea to France. On the following day Evandale, discovering their flight, entered the castle and took possession in the name of the king.

It was during the time that the castle of Dunbar was thus besieged, or when the garrison had secured their escape, that the Duke of Albany by a wonderful effort of subtlety and daring contrived to free himself from imprisonment. While he was closely warded in the castle of Edinburgh, and had in vain appealed to the king, a French vessel, hired by himself or his friends, arrived as if by accident in the Forth and cast anchor at Newhaven, a village in the neighbourhood of Edinburgh. The captain pretended that he had a cargo of choice wines for sale, and Albany, as if desirous to make proof of their excellence, obtained leave of the keeper of the castle to send for a couple of jars from the ship, that he might have the first taste of the vintage. The wine was obtained; but in one of the jars was concealed a roll of wax, in the heart of which was a paper conveying tidings of the plots of his enemies against him, and in the other jar a long rope with which to make his escape. To make these means available it was now necessary to elude his keepers, by whom he was carefully watched, but whom he had already partly thrown off their guard by his confident bearing, and by his declarations that in a day or two the king was going to set him at liberty. He invited the captain of the castle to sup with him and partake of his good malvoisie; and he ordered his groom, who was his sole attendant, to abstain that evening from the wine-pot, as there might probably be work for him on hand. When the hour of supper approached the castellan passed to the king's chamber to receive his orders, for James at that time was lodging in the castle, and after this made the round of the gates and sentries, where, finding that all was secure, he repaired to the duke's apartment with four of the garrison, whose especial office it was to keep guard upon the prisoner. The fire was hot, the wine strong and heady, and the thoughtless guests were speedily intoxicated, while Albany, who had allured the captain with games of chess and dice, and the emptying of flagons by way of

forfeits, had reserved himself for action. It is added that this was his last stake for life, as it had been resolved to try and execute him on the morrow. When the favourable moment arrived the duke suddenly cut down the captain of the castle with a sword-stroke and despatched two of his attendants who were too far gone to resist or give the alarm, while the other two were slain by the faithful groom who had started at his master's signal. The bodies were thrown into the fire, and the duke and his servant passing to an obscure part of the wall out of sight of the sentinels, lowered the rope with which they had been provided. But it proved too short, and the servant, who first descended that dangerous perpendicular rock, broke his leg in dropping to the ground. Warned by this accident the duke added the sheets of his bed to the rope, and thus managed to descend safely; but mindful of his faithful attendant, although his own danger of recapture was so imminent, he took him on his back, carried him as far as he was able, and put him in a place of safety before he thought of his own. It is from one such trait as this that we can understand the devotedness of Scottish servants to their lords. Albany reached the vessel at Newhaven, and in a few moments was in safety under a press of sail. On the morning there was uproar and confusion in the castle: a long rope had been seen dangling from the wall, and on rushing to the duke's chamber the guards found nothing but the bodies of their commander and companions half consumed on the hearth. The king was confounded at the tidings of such an escape, which he could not believe until he had marked the place with his own eyes; and thinking still that Albany could not be far off he caused parties of horsemen to scour the neighbourhood, with promises of large rewards for his apprehension. It was only when information was brought to them by a man from Leith of certain persons whom he had seen conveyed from the shore to a French ship during the night that the enemies of the duke were assured of his complete escape, and the means by which it had been effected.²

From this singular escape of the Duke of Albany our attention is naturally recalled to his brother, the Earl of Mar, who was not destined to be so fortunate. His place of imprisonment was the castle of Craigmillar; and it is easy to imagine that the sense of his wrongs and impatience of restraint, with the uncertainty of what might yet await him, were enough to extort from him the utterance of indignation in no measured terms. And that such would be

¹ Lesley's *History of Scotland*, p. 43.

² Pitscottie, pp. 204-207.

laid hold of and perverted to his destruction, was equally probable. And now follows an episode, dark, terrible, and mysterious, which our early historians have hastily passed over as if it had been too dangerous to be unfolded, or too incredible and unnatural to be believed. He was tried, we are briefly told, for attempts upon the life of his royal brother; but where the trial was held, or who were his judges, is nowhere mentioned. These attempts, also, instead of assuming the ordinary forms of treason, were represented to be of such a kind as were most likely to alarm the superstitious mind of the king; for he was said to have consulted with witches and sorcerers, and to have used their Satanic arts for the accomplishment of the deed. Either to give a colouring also to the charge, or in consequence of the panic which it created, several men and women, who were stated to have been his accomplices, were publicly burned in Edinburgh.¹ Whether a trial was actually held upon the earl or not, we only learn that the earl was conveyed from the castle of Craigmillar to a house in the Canongate, where, being put into a warm bath, his veins were opened and he was bled to death.² Such is the scanty and obscure outline of a deed that leaves the deepest blot upon the character of James III. It is worthy of remark, also, that the present was a period particularly rife in royal fratricides, as the instances of Louis XI. of France and of Edward IV. of England have too well testified.³

Although Albany obtained the protection of Louis he could procure nothing further; for notwithstanding his solicitations for a body of foreign troops with which he proposed to return to Scotland and right himself by warring against James, the cautious King of France had no wish to break with a useful ally for the interests of a rebel and malcontent. It is from this period that the character of Albany presents itself to our notice as that of a selfish Scot and treacherous patriot, and in all his subsequent movements we discover no motive higher than that of his own personal aggrandizement. On escaping to France he divorced his first wife, a daughter of the Earl of Orkney, that he might espouse in her stead Anne de la Tour, daughter of the Count d'Auvergne, one of the greatest fortunes in France; and having thus in part become a Frenchman, Louis so far bestirred himself in his behalf as to send an envoy to Scotland requesting that the duke might be pardoned and recalled. The messenger whom he sent for this purpose was Dr.

Ireland, a Scottish priest educated in France—a man of great learning and accomplishments in whose society James had taken pleasure, and whose services he had endeavoured, but in vain, to secure for the Scottish court by liberal offers of promotion. To the entreaty in behalf of his brother the king so far assented that instead of carrying into effect the doom of forfeiture proclaimed against the duke he deferred its execution from one parliament to another. But a negotiation which Louis had still more at heart formed also a part of Dr. Ireland's commission, and it was to stir up James against Edward IV. and provoke the renewal of hostilities between Scotland and England. Unfortunately for himself James consented, and preparations for hostilities against England were commenced upon an ample scale. This was enough to rouse the formidable Edward from his luxurious indolence and provoke his remonstrances both with France and England. Louis had cajoled him out of France by engagements which he had broken, and now he was in league with the enemies of England for the purpose of stirring up a new war. Of James also he could well complain that after having paid three annual instalments of the marriage portion of his daughter Cecilia, the King of Scots was taking a step by which this union would be frustrated, the repayment of the money delayed or eluded, and the harmony of the two countries destroyed. But as he knew that mere complaints would be ineffectual to arrest the coming storm, he appointed his brother, the Duke of Gloucester (afterwards Richard III.), lieutenant-general of the north on the 12th of May, 1480, and commissioned him to make war against the Scots. But even before this brave and active leader could commence operations the Scots had anticipated him by one of those Border incursions which had mischief and plunder rather than military glory for their object. As if impatient of the long peace which had withheld them from the rich farms and villages of England, a small army of Borderers commanded by the Earl of Angus rushed across the marches, wasted a large portion of Northumberland, burned the town of Bamborough, and returned with their spoil unmolested.⁴

This blow of defiance was enough for England, and the means of retaliation were hurried on with double urgency. On the 20th of June (1480) Edward ordered his army to hold themselves in readiness. He commanded a fleet to be prepared for the invasion of Scotland by sea. He tampered with the Scottish malcontents, the Lord of the Isles and his kins-

¹ Lesley, p. 43; Ferrerius, p. 393.

² Pitscottie, p. 183.

³ Histories of France and England.

⁴ Rymer, xii. 115; Ferrerius, 394; Lesley, 45.

man Donald Gorm, who as yet had been only retained in their allegiance by force and fear, but who were ready to adopt the cause of the enemies of Scotland in the hope of recovering their old independence.¹ But a more formidable adherent whom he won over was the Duke of Albany, still in France, to whom he held out the prospect of succeeding to the Scottish crown by the dethronement of his brother; and allured by this dazzling prospect, the duke threw whatever remnants of loyalty he may have retained to the winds and passed over from France to England to fight for his promised inheritance. Impatient though Edward might be for action these preliminaries occasioned some delay, so that hostilities were not commenced until the ensuing year. But during this interval James had not been idle. His inability to confront the dangers of warfare did not impair his prudence and activity in preparing for it, and accordingly every arrangement was made to put Scotland in a state of complete defence both upon the Borders and at sea. The people of the different counties who were liable to military service were ordered to be ready on eight days' notice, and even the weapons with which they were to arm themselves were specified by parliamentary statute.² Thus, all being prepared, James sent an envoy to the English king warning him to desist from aiding the Duke of Burgundy, otherwise he should be obliged to give assistance to the King of France; but the messenger, after being long detained, was scornfully dismissed without an answer. If we may believe an old authority, Louis, that royal broker who achieved his victories by money, had already paid the price of James' interference. By the marriage treaty of 1474 between the infant son of James and the daughter of Edward, the former king, in the event of going to war with England, was to return whatever portion of the dowry he had previously received; and this he had already got to the amount of at least six thousand marks, which he would have been very unwilling to repay. But here the French king, accustomed to such modes of bargaining, removed the difficulty by at once offering to advance the moneys, so that James might be enabled to defy his creditor without scruple or hesitation.³ Amidst all this turmoil of warlike preparation we find only one voice raised in behalf of peace, and, as might be expected, raised in vain. Thomas Spence, Bishop of Aber-

deen, whose constant cares had been to promote the friendly intercourse of Scotland with England, France, and Burgundy, as the best source of its welfare, and who had opposed this expedition from the commencement, now fell into a profound melancholy through the mournful forebodings with which he was haunted, and died broken-hearted during the present year.⁴

The Scottish army now commenced its march, and from its numbers and excellent equipments great expectations must have been entertained of its exploits and final success. But from the short and confused accounts which have been given of this expedition not a stroke was dealt or single advantage achieved. This remissness was owing to no lack of zeal on the part of the Scottish troops, but to the provident cares of the church on account of the dangers with which Christendom at large was threatened at the present period. Before the army had reached the English border a papal legate arrived at the camp with bulls from the pontiff commanding a cessation of the war, on account of the danger with which the church was threatened by the Turks, who had invaded Italy, and the necessity of close union among all Christian princes for the expulsion of the common enemy. There was a pause at this command; and James, who did not dare to disobey, dismissed his army. As the same prohibition extended to England it was expected that Edward IV. would have followed the example; but instead of this his army assailed the Scottish border and burned about sixty small hamlets, while his fleet, entering the Forth, captured eight merchant vessels and destroyed the village of Blackness. Such a result was scarcely worth the labour of campaign and the additional risk of excommunication for setting Rome at defiance; but if a statement which has been made be true he could safely persist in such hardihood, the legate having been no other than a knavish monk whom he had employed to personate an ambassador of the church, and had furnished with forged credentials and fitting costume for the masquerade.⁵ But on the other hand the Scottish Borderers made severe reprisals, while the English ships were so roughly handled by Andrew Wood of Leith, the Scottish admiral, to whom the protection of the coast was committed, that they were glad to shift sail and retire to the shelter of their own harbours.

As it was not by such paltry inroads and skirmishes that Edward could hope to subdue the Scots, he had recourse to more effectual means of success; and the chief of these was to

¹ Rymer, xii. 140.

² *Acts of the Parliament of Scotland*, ii. p. 132.

³ Balfour's *Annals of Scotland*. It appears, however, either that Louis did not fulfil his promise (a very possible contingency), or that James, if he received the money, did not hand it over to the English king, as the sum was ultimately defrayed by the citizens of Edinburgh.

⁴ Lesley's *History of Scotland*, p. 44.

⁵ Balfour's *Annals*, p. 204.

arm one portion of the people against the other and reduce the country by the swords of its own rebellious children. This he could the more easily accomplish as, besides having the Duke of Albany and the banished Earl of Douglas at his court, he could through their influence and that of the Lord of the Isles be secure of the co-operation of their kindred and allies in Scotland. Accordingly he drew up the outline of a formal treaty with Albany at Fotheringay Castle on the 10th of June, 1482, giving a substantial basis to those hopes under which the recreant duke had been allured from France and induced to become a manifest traitor. It was therein stipulated that Alexander, Duke of Albany, should assume and hold the title of King of Scotland; in consideration of which he bound himself to adopt the cause of Edward, to render homage to the English king within a month after his possession of the Scottish throne, to break the ancient alliance between France and Scotland, and to surrender to England the town and castle of Berwick. To these conditions, so subversive of the interests of his country, he agreed without scruple; and as if he had been impatient to enter upon his royal title and to vindicate his right to make such a compact, he signed himself Alexander R., as if he had been already the true and lawful King of Scotland. By another condition it was agreed that if the duke could be lawfully separated from his wife¹ he should receive in marriage Cecilia, the young princess who had been previously contracted to his nephew, the Prince of Scotland, but which contract was now a political impossibility.

While the kingdom was thus bought and sold between such unprincipled bargainers its unfortunate sovereign was not only surrounded by those nobles who were ready to betray him, but giving cause and argument for their conduct by his ill-advised proceedings. Although his chief reliance at the present crisis, when the appeal of arms was at issue, could only rest upon the fealty of his warlike chiefs, he continued his preference for those low-born favourites to whom these proud nobles attributed the chief calamities of the country. Of these the principal was Cochrane the architect, who, independently of his professional skill, possessed other qualities that fitted him to be a royal favourite. He was brave and accomplished in martial exercises, and in this way had first attracted the eye of his royal master, who from that period set no bounds to his partiality; so

that in a short time the upstart was not only superintendent of the king's principal buildings, but the director of his counsels and chief manager of the affairs of the kingdom. In this situation he sold court offices and church benefices to the highest bidders; he allowed none to have access to the sovereign except those who bribed him for the privilege; and no persons had place at court except those who ministered to his avarice and did homage to his pride. But not content with these limited spheres of profit, he extended the evil effects of his greed over all classes by debasing the national coinage, so that the industrious and the poor were equally sufferers; and when warned that this black money, usually called the "Cochrane plack," would ensure his ruin by being cried down, he was so confident of his influence that he arrogantly replied, "On the day that it is cried down I will be hanged!"—as if both events had been equally impossible. But the king's infatuation reached its height, and endangered himself as well as the favourite, when upon the death of his unfortunate brother he raised Cochrane to the revenues, and probably also to the honours and title of the earldom of Mar. The nobles were indignant beyond measure on finding a "mason," as they persisted in terming the court minion, thus promoted to the rank of a prince; and after meeting to deliberate upon the means of recovering the nation from disgrace they sent a deputation to the king requiring him to dismiss Cochrane and the other favourites from his presence, and restore the nobles to their proper place in his councils. Their application was unsuccessful, and they resolved to right themselves in their own rude manner as soon as the opportunity should arise. Let but a war with England summon them into the field at the head of their armed retainers, and there they would be able not only to dictate their own terms but enforce their fulfilment.²

And that opportunity had now arrived. A national military muster was ordered to confront the English invasion in July (1482); the royal banner was set up at the Borough-moor in the neighbourhood of Edinburgh, and thither repaired the nobles with alacrity, but for a different purpose than that which the king had contemplated. Fifty thousand feudal soldiers had assembled at the summons; and thither also came the doomed favourites, with Cochrane himself as Earl of Mar, to whom James had given the command of the artillery, and who appeared in the field with a pomp which outblazed that of the highest nobility, and only confirmed their deadly purposes against him. Even his tent was covered with curtains of silk and held to-

¹ Rymer, xii. pp. 154-156. If he could "make himself clear of other women" is the phrase used, making it probable that the duke had not as yet become a widower.

² Buchanan, xii. 38; Pitscottie, 184, 185.

gether by finely-twisted silken cords. The army marched first to Soutra and thence to Lauder, intending to relieve Berwick, which was besieged by the Dukes of Gloucester and Albany; but they halted at Lauder and encamped between the church and the village, for there the contemplated tragedy was to be performed. The lords, to the number of twenty-four, then met in the church of Lauder in secret council, of whom the chief were the highest nobles of the kingdom—the Earls of Angus, Argyle, Huntly, Orkney, Crawford; and the Lords Home, Fleming, Gray, Hailes, and Seton. There also was Evandale, lord-chancellor, and certain bishops whose names are not given, as if the sanctions of the law and the church had combined to make the conspiracy a matter of solemn and righteous trial. What was to be done for the welfare of the realm? What for the defence of the Borders? Should they pass onward with the king to the relief of Berwick, or proceed at once to the work on hand? These were the questions at issue; and at last it was concluded that “the king should be taken softly without harm of his body and conveyed to the castle of Edinburgh, with certain gentlemen, and there to remain till they were further advised;” and as for the favourites, that they should be executed as traitors by being hanged over the bridge of Lauder. But this might be no easy or bloodless proceeding from the strength, valour, and daring spirit of Cochrane, as well as the formidable retinue he commanded and the artillery which was under his order. This was hinted by Lord Gray in the language of an old fable. The mice, he said, having once deliberated in full council how to free themselves from the attacks of their dreaded enemy, agreed that the best plan would be to get a bell hung about the neck of the cat, so that they might always have timely warning of puss’s approach. But here lay the difficulty—what mouse would be courageous enough to put on the bell? This question called up the Earl of Angus, as bold a Douglas as any who ever bore the name, who briefly replied, “I shall bell the cat!”

At this moment, when all was in readiness for action and when their attempt could only have been attended with uproar and bloodshed in the camp, they were saved from this necessity by a singular coincidence. Cochrane, either suspicious of the purpose of this meeting and resolved to outbrave it, or thinking it an open council of war, advanced to the kirk in full confidence, and with a style and retinue more befitting a prince than a son of the soil or creature of handicraft. He was richly dressed in a riding cloak of black velvet; a chain of gold valued at five hundred crowns hung round his neck; his

hunting-horn was adorned with gold and precious stones, and his helmet, which was overlaid with gold, was borne before him; while his train or body-guard consisted of three hundred men armed with light battle-axes and clothed in his livery of white with black fillets. He knocked boisterously at the kirk-door, and to the question from within, “Who is there?” he arrogantly replied, “It is I—it is the Earl of Mar!” The council were delighted at his coming within their reach, and the Earl of Angus advanced to *bell the cat*. No sooner had Cochrane entered than the stalwart earl clutched at his gold chain with a force that nearly strangled the wearer, exclaiming to the by-standers, “A rope would suit him better!” Sir Robert Douglas of Lochleven then plucked away the architect’s hunting horn, exclaiming, “He has been overlong a hunter of mischief!” Cochrane, a man not easily daunted, asked, “My lords, is this jest or earnest?” But his doubts were quickly resolved; for, after loading him with reproaches and binding his hands, they sent certain of their number to the king to hold him in conference while they should secure the other favourites. This was soon effected; and Dr. Rogers, the English musician, whom the king for his beautiful compositions had knighted; Hommil, the tailor, whose name frequently occurs in the king’s household expenditure as the shaper and maker of the royal apparel; Preston the gentleman; Torphichen, the master of fence; Leonard, and some others who had enjoyed the confidence and favour of James, were hanged before his eyes over the bridge of Lauder—none was spared except John Ramsay of Balmain, a stripling, only sixteen years old, who clasped the king round the waist when the others were seized, and for whose life James earnestly pleaded. The last sufferer in this terrible scene was Cochrane, who, on being led to execution, entreated that his arms might be bound with a silken cord from his own tent instead of a rope like a common thief; but he was answered, That he was worse than a thief; he was a traitor, and deserved no better; while, to do him further shame, he was hanged in a halter of hair instead of hemp, and at a higher elevation than the rest. On the same day his worthless coin was cried down, and thus, without intending it, he fulfilled his own prophecy.¹

In this abrupt manner was James deprived of his bosom friends and counsellors, whose loss he must have keenly felt, and whose execution he would be certain to revenge. But it appears that he was no longer a king or a free agent except in show and title. He was gently “con-

¹ Pitscottie; Buchanan; Ferrerius; Lesley.

veyed" to the castle of Edinburgh, waited upon with the wonted observances of royalty, and royal letters and proclamations were issued in his name as before; but in all other respects he appears to have been as helpless in his own fortress as he had been at the bridge of Lauder. With the retreat of the nobles the troops had been withdrawn; and thus the Dukes of Gloucester and Albany, after leaving a sufficient force to continue the leaguer of Berwick, advanced with their main army towards Edinburgh. And, indeed, the renounced Gloucester had a great interest at stake; for he aimed at the succession to the throne of England by setting aside the children of his two elder brothers, and if he could previously establish Albany in the place of James III. the iniquity of his own usurpation would be palliated. He might also rely in his difficulties upon the aid of the new Scottish king. But he seems to have overlooked the fact that the Scots were not likely to set the regular succession aside; and the lawful heir, even though a minor, would be recognized as sovereign of the kingdom, while the government itself would be placed under a regency until the young prince was of age. Thus the utmost that Albany could obtain would be the post of regent, governor, or protector. It was probably from some suspicion of Albany's ambitious hopes, backed as they were with an English army, that the Scottish nobles took the alarm: though they had hanged the favourites of James they had no desire to dethrone him, far less to receive his successor from the English. This coalition must have convinced the Duke of Gloucester and abated his interest in Albany: it was evident that his protégé could never be King of Scotland. In this dilemma, and with a strong Scottish army at hand, the dukes were ready to listen to terms which were brought to them from the confederate nobles by Schevez, Archbishop of St. Andrews, and Livingston, Bishop of Dunkeld. By these the confederates engaged to procure Albany's pardon and his reposition in his dignities and estates; and the pardon of his adherents, except those who had been previously specified by the proclamations of parliament. The conditions were gladly accepted; for Gloucester, who had got possession of Berwick, had made no unprofitable campaign, and was to be allowed to retreat to England unmolested, while Albany, who found himself in the predicament of a traitor, could now resume his offices in Scotland and renew, it might be, his intrigues, with a better prospect of success. The only ground of future quarrel that remained between the two kingdoms was the repayment of that part of the portion of the Princess Cecilia which Edward IV. had already advanced; but

here the provost and burgesses of Edinburgh interposed with a liberality that might have put the chivalrous nobles to the blush. They engaged to defray the debt if Edward still refused to complete the marriage, and in two months afterwards they discharged the whole amount.¹ After the termination of this treaty Gloucester and his army retired peacefully into England.

James was once more at liberty, and nominally at least at the head of the government; but in the recoil that had taken place the authority of Albany predominated over his own. This we can trace in the annals of the rest of this year (1482), although they are so contradictory and obscure. According to one statement the duke crowned his popularity by becoming the champion in arms of his sovereign and his liberator from captivity, by besieging the castle of Edinburgh and rescuing the king from his keepers, who had harshly treated him and even menaced his life. It is added that such was the cordiality established between them by this fraternal exploit that they rode from the castle to Holyrood on one horse, and afterwards shared one table and one bed. But with whatever pageant the release of James may have been accompanied, it is certain that it was followed by the payment of concessions which his soul must have abhorred. He was compelled to part with the few friends who still adhered to him, and deprive some of them of their offices. He was obliged to subscribe those parliamentary records which gave a distorted view of the state of affairs and lauded the proceedings of Albany. He was required to bestow honours and rewards upon those who were the tools and supporters of the duke, but who were represented as men who had hazarded their lives in the king's defence. But the deepest degradation of all was his necessity to subscribe the appointment of Albany as lieutenant-general of the kingdom. The three estates of parliament, expressing their unwillingness to expose the person of their sovereign to danger in the defence of the realm, had conferred the high office upon the duke as if James had been still a minor, or a king unfitted for rule, and he was obliged to assent, besides investing his now overpowerful subject with the large and rich earldom of Mar and Garioch. James was now a helpless Robert III., with a Duke of Albany over him for director and master, and it only remained to be seen whether the ambition, talents, and craft of the last duke of the name were equal to those of the first for the permanent establishment of a similar supremacy.²

¹ Rymer, xii. p. 161.

² *Acts of the Parliament of Scotland*, ii. pp. 143, 144.

CHAPTER VII.

REIGN OF JAMES III.—CONCLUSION (1482-1488).

Albany's continued plots to obtain the crown—His treacherous compact for that purpose with Edward IV.—Terms of the agreement—Its advantageous prospects to both parties—It is suddenly cancelled by the death of Edward IV.—Albany's designs suspected by the Scottish nobles—His growing unpopularity—He is obliged to retire to England—Account of Lord Crichton, his adherent—The Duke of Albany's rash invasion of Scotland—His defeat at Kirkcubright—Earl Douglas, who accompanies him, taken prisoner—His imprisonment in the monastery of Lindores—Peaceful disposition of Richard III. towards Scotland—Terms of truce between England and Scotland—The Duke of Albany retires to France—His accidental death—Pacific state of affairs in Scotland—Parliamentary enactments—Continuation of peace with England on the accession of Henry VII.—Death of Margaret of Denmark, queen of James III.—Distrust in which he is held by the nobles—His last parliament—Its proceedings and enactments—Offence given by the king to the Homes and Hepburnes—The nobles assemble in arms against James—Their fruitless attempt to win Earl Douglas to their cause—They set up James, Duke of Rothesay, against his father—Refusal of Earl Douglas to join the king—Meeting of the royal and rebel armies—A treaty of amity formed—The civil war speedily renewed—James retreats to Stirling—His parley with the governor of the castle—The opposing armies meet near Bannockburn—Battle of Sauchieburn—Flight of James from the field—His mysterious assassination—His character.

The Duke of Albany having thus attained the chief rule of the kingdom, was still dissatisfied; he coveted the title as well as the power of a king, the glittering externals of royalty as well as its substantial realities. For this he had already pledged himself as the vassal and liegeman of Edward, and betrayed the town of Berwick into the possession of England; and having thus incurred the risk of a traitor as soon as his treachery should be discovered, he was anxious to reap the reward of his concessions, as well as place himself beyond the danger with which they were attended. Unwarned by the example of the steadfast loyalty of his countrymen to the elder branch of his family as the established dynasty, and by the failure of his late attempt backed as it was by an English army, he would still be king in reality. He therefore renewed his application to Edward IV., and his offers of submission and allegiance through his ambassadors, the Earl of Angus, Lord Gray, and Sir James Liddel, who were met at Westminster on the part of Edward by the Earl of Northumberland, Lord Scrope, and Sir William Parr. Quick work was made between these noble commissioners, although the transfer of a crown and kingdom was at issue, and the chief conditions of this treaty made on the 11th of February, 1483, were the following:—

First of all it was accorded that there should be good amity, love, favour, and friendly intelligence between the most excellent Prince Edward, King of England and France, on the one side, and the high and mighty Prince Alexander, Duke of Albany, on the other, so that they should mutually aid, assist, and supply one another all that they can or may for upholding,

maintaining, and increasing their estates against all persons that would attempt the contrary.

There was to be a truce and abstinence of war for one whole year "by land and fresh waters" between the subjects of the two kingdoms; and during this truce, and after it if need should be, the Scottish ambassadors pledged themselves that the duke should "daily intend to the conquest of the crown of Scotland to his proper use, so and in such wise that thereby he and all the nobles of Scotland taking his part may do the King of England and his heirs great and mighty service against the occupiers of the crown of France." It was also promised that as soon as the duke should assume to himself the crown of Scotland, or within forty days afterwards, he should cause the league between France and Scotland to be utterly broken and annulled, and that no other similar league should thenceforth be made with France either by him or his subjects. As soon as this was done the duke was to declare himself and his heirs, with all the nobles and commons of Scotland now his subjects, to be for the King of England and his heirs against all their adversaries, and especially the occupants of the throne of France, and that they should bind themselves to service of war against these occupants with all their power and at their own proper cost.

The ambassadors promised not only in the name of the duke, but also for themselves and their friends, that no question should be made hereafter or title pretended to the possession of the town and castle of Berwick, but that the King of England should continue to possess them peaceably at his own good-will and pleasure.

It was also agreed by the Scottish ambassadors, in their own name and that of their friends, that whenever it should please the King of England to write to the Duke of Albany for the restitution of the Scottish lands of James Earl of Douglas, they should provide and see that the earl was replaced in them, according to an agreement which had previously been made between him and the Earl of Angus.

The Duke of Albany being king and at liberty to marry, it was agreed that he should espouse one of the King of England's daughters, but without receiving any dowry.

To give full assurance of the steadfast adherence of Albany and his supporters to this new treaty, by which they were to become vassals of the English crown, it was stipulated that, in consideration of the aid which the duke was to receive from England, he was never to desist from his purpose for any offer or treaty on the part of James or any of his issue, or live in allegiance to them. The ambassadors also bound themselves on their own part, by their faith, honour, and knighthood, that should the duke and his heirs decease, they would never live under the allegiance of any other sovereign than the King of England, he being their good and gracious prince, "helping and rewarding them for their services after their degrees and deserts;" and that they should keep their castles, houses, and strengths from "James, now King of Scots," against all the enemies of the King of England.

In this reckless manner the ambassadors of the Duke of Albany surrendered, piece by piece, the liberties of their country for the gratification of their master's ambition and their own selfish interests. The restoration of the Earl of Douglas to his forfeited estates, which forms so important a clause in the treaty, appears at first sight startling when we remember that the Earl of Angus himself, the supplanter of the elder Douglas and the inheritor of his influence and family honours, was at the head of the Scottish negotiators. But Angus hitherto had been the unscrupulous adherent of Albany and the confidant of his intrigues for the throne; and from the terms of the clause it is intimated that the two traitor earls of the dishonoured race of Douglas had formed a previous compact in which the nature and amount of the restitution was specified, and in which it may be safely assumed that Angus, as the more influential party in the treaty, was careful not to concede too much. He would abate no jot of his resolution to be the highest noble of Scotland, whosoever might be Earl of Douglas or king. In return for these compliances the engagements of the English commissioners on the part of their sovereign

were as ample as Albany could have wished. They "promised and granted that the King of England will and shall help and assist the said Duke of Albany to the conquest of the crown of Scotland, and for that intent send in all goodly haste his brother the Duke of Gloucester and his cousin the Earl of Northumberland, wardens of the marches, towards those parts, they always to be ready upon convenient warning to give and send such aid of archers and other warlike men to the duke, for the intent above-said, as shall be thought necessary for the season, and namely to the number of three thousand archers, supplied and paid at the king's charge for six weeks; and in case there happen a great day of rescue of the duke, or any other necessary defence for him to be appointed, the king will see that the duke be assisted and helped by such a notable army, joined to his friends, as with God's grace shall suffice."

If Albany was gratified by this treaty, which brought him so near the fulfilment of his hopes, it was equally agreeable to Edward IV. By the treaty of Picquigny, in which Louis XI. had promised everything in order to be rid of the English invasion of France, he had engaged among other matters that his son the dauphin should marry Edward's eldest daughter Elizabeth, or in case of her death her sister Mary, as soon as either princess was of age. But while the English king was peacefully awaiting the season of fulfilment Louis was aggrandizing himself by the annexation of valuable portions of Burgundy to the French crown after the death of Charles the Bold, Edward's brother-in-law; and when the fit time of marriage had arrived the French king, instead of preparing for the nuptials of his son to the English princess, affianced him to the Countess Mougot, grand-daughter of Charles of Burgundy, an infant only three years old, but the heiress of Flanders, the richest province of Europe. Thus Edward was duped as well as disappointed; his fury knew no bounds, and he swore he would carry such a war into France as that country had never yet seen.¹ Few events, therefore, could have been more propitious for his purpose than the succession of Albany to the crown of Scotland, for it would not only detach that kingdom from its old alliance with France, but enlist its military resources in his cause. But while Edward raged and threatened, and seemed likely to fulfil his threats, as he had only reached the noon of life, while Louis, his rival, was an old man worn out with disease, an arrest was laid upon his purposes by a fatal malady which after a few weeks terminated his existence on

¹ Barante; Comines.

the 9th of April, 1483. This unexpected death made the late treaty with Albany a piece of worthless parchment, except as a memorial of the times and an illustration of events which might otherwise be perplexing and contradictory. The Duke of Gloucester, who now succeeded to the office of protector, which he was resolved to exchange for that of king, was for the present engrossed with more urgent considerations than the conquest of either France or Scotland; and Albany was soon doomed to learn that he had jeopardied his safety at home and his reputation with the world at large for hopes that could not be realized and promises that would never be fulfilled.

It was indeed impossible in such a country as Scotland, where the people were so much alive to every movement of England, that the duke's intrigues could remain unnoticed. The auspices under which he returned to Scotland were enough to excite suspicion; his tampering with the English court and the envoys he sent thither must have produced anxiety and alarm; and, although the express nature of his treachery was still undetected, enough had been shown to justify the better part of the nobility in banding themselves for the protection of the kingdom and its national independence. Albany soon found himself so unpopular and so closely watched that he was fain to remove to his castle of Dunbar; but finding himself still pursued with suspicion, or desirous to complete his arrangements with Edward for the invasion of Scotland, he repaired to England, and there surrendered the castle of Dunbar to be occupied by an English garrison. But brief was his stay in England when the death of its king occurred, so that he was obliged to construct his plots anew and with diminished prospects of success. In the meantime his treasonable designs had been manifested by his late deeds, followed by his hasty departure to England; and at a sitting of parliament a sentence of forfeiture was pronounced upon his life, lands, offices, and possessions. The same sentence was issued against several of his supporters, who like himself were cited but failed to make their appearance. The chief of these was Lord Crichton, who occupies an undesirable place in the history of this dark and perplexing period.¹ His ostensible crime was his fortifying the castle of Crichton to hold out against the royal authority, but a deeper motive is alleged for his disloyal resistance than mere devotedness to the cause of the Duke of Albany. The king had seduced his beautiful wife; and the injured husband retaliated by seducing the king's sister Margaret, by whom

he had a daughter, Margaret Crichton, who died a short time before Buchanan wrote his history. But this foul domestic warfare between the king and the noble acquires tenfold loathsomeness from a statement of the same historian to the effect that the Princess Margaret was already infamous for too close a connection with her own royal brother. Crichton, on the flight of his patron Albany, fled to England, and there he abode during the short and troubled reign of Richard III. We follow his subsequent career for a moment as a solitary episode. Crichton's faithless wife died during his exile, while his worthless paramour Margaret, who was nearly distracted by his absence, so moved the compassion of James, that partly on this account, partly from remorse at the injury he had done to Crichton, and partly with the wish to veil his sister's shame by a marriage with Crichton, that nobleman was invited to Scotland a short time after the accession of Henry VII. and had a peaceful interview with James at Inverness, in which he was promised a full restoration to his estates and honours. Here the story abruptly terminates with the intimation of Buchanan that his tomb is still shown at Inverness. Whether an interval of any length had preceded his death, in which his rank and holding were restored and his marriage with the princess effected, we have not the slightest notice. It is a tale of iniquity that flashes but for a moment through the darkness, and from which we willingly turn away.²

The usurpation of the throne of England by Richard III. was effected in so brief a period and by such a rapid series of crafty devices and daring deeds, while the seat thus won had to be maintained against such a variety of powerful opponents, that the new king had little leisure to attend to the interests of the Scottish exiles. For the consolidation also of his own precarious authority, which every wind could shake, it was his interest to be at peace with Scotland instead of involving himself in its party feuds and contentions. Therefore, although he increased the pension of the Earl of Douglas and gave honourable entertainment to Albany, he bestowed no farther encouragement. In the meantime Scotland, on the accession of Charles VIII. of France, had renewed her ancient league with that country, and such an interchange of friendly embassies had taken place as promised that the agreement would be cordial and lasting. All this concord in behalf of their native land made these traitors only the more urgent to disturb it, so that Richard

¹ *Acts of the Parliament of Scotland*, ii. 152-154.

² Buchanan, l. xii. 50, 51.

at last yielded to their solicitations. His affairs could not brook too closely the inspection of his neighbours, and he may have felt that the time had come when his interests could be usefully served by involving the Scots in quarrels of their own. His aid, however, to Albany and Douglas was sparing, consisting of only five hundred horse; and this added to the foot which they had collected on the Borders, and their own retainers who were expected to join them on their entrance into Scotland, would suffice, as they hoped, to bear down all opposition and carry them in triumph to Edinburgh. Impatient for action, they left their infantry at the bottom of Brunswark Hill and pushed forward to Lochmaben with their cavalry, hoping to take the town by surprise and be joined there by a whole army of their old feudal retainers. This sudden visit was made on St. Magdalene's Day, the 22d of July (1484), a day on which a great fair was held and all manner of goods set out for sale; and the shopkeepers, alarmed at the coming of five hundred English riders in warlike fashion, rushed to their weapons, well knowing that they would be exposed to the risk of plunder whether a Douglas or a Percy was at the head of the invaders. A furious battle commenced at Kirkconnel, near Lochmaben; the traffickers fought gallantly in defence of their wares; and being aided by several of the neighbouring gentlemen who hurried from their quiet houses to take a share in the conflict, the English, after a hard fight of several hours, were broken, scattered, and chased back to the Border. As for Albany himself, the leader of this great invasion which so suddenly dwindled into a paltry raid and disgraceful defeat, he was on the point of being taken, and only escaped by the swiftness of his horse which carried him across the Border into England; but Douglas, his associate, who was now old and oppressed by the weight of armour which he had long disused, was captured, and that too by neither knight nor noble, but a mean man, Alexander Kirkpatrick, who for the deed was rewarded with a grant of the lands of Kirkmichael. On being brought in this plight before his sovereign, the earl, whose whole life had been a career of treason and rebellion thus hopelessly closed by utter defeat and shame, presented such a spectacle of blighted ambition as might well have warned the Scottish courtiers had they been accessible to warning. Such was the close of a race renowned throughout Europe, and whose heroic crests had so often eclipsed the royal diadem! Feeling the change, the humbled old man, instead of confronting the king, turned his back upon him as if in scorn; but James, instead of punishing him more

harshly, sentenced him to confinement for life in the monastery of Lindores—the place where he had received the earlier part of his education. On hearing his sentence the earl only muttered, “He who may no better must needs be a monk.” He returned to the monastic cell which he had better never have quitted, and resumed those theological studies and peaceful meditations which he had unwisely exchanged for the offices of the warrior and statesman.¹

It was fortunate for the two kingdoms that this ill-concerted expedition was so speedily overthrown; that it produced no greater interruption of the public peace than if it had been a common Border brawl. Richard could now perceive the uselessness of Albany as an ally for the promotion of his interests in Scotland, and he saw that these could be better advanced by conciliation and amicable treaty. Peace was equally desirable for James, who, besides his habitual dislike of war, had no desire to see his nobles once more assembled at the head of their warlike retinues. In this mood of the two sovereigns a Scottish embassy headed by Colin Earl of Argyle and chancellor, William Elphinstone, Bishop of Aberdeen, and the lords Evandale, Lyle, and Oliphant, was met at Nottingham by John Duke of Norfolk, the Earl of Northumberland, Lord Stanley, and the Bishop of St. Asaph. Of the treaty which they concluded towards the close of this year (1484), the following were the chief particulars:—A truce of three years was to exist between the two kingdoms, during which all castles, fortresses, and towns were to remain with their present possessors. From this, however, was excepted the castle of Dunbar, which the Duke of Albany had delivered to the English, but which the Scots by a singular clause were to be permitted to retake if they could, after an interval of six months from that date, and upon giving fair notice of their purpose six months previously to the King of England. No rebel or outlaw of either kingdom was to be sheltered in the other; and in every safe-conduct granted, the restriction was to be introduced, “Provided that the obtainer of this safe-conduct be no traitor.” It had been the fashion for twenty years to except in such truces the paltry and almost inaccessible isle of Lundy in the estuary of the Severn, which had become a lawless Alsatia of pirates, for whose doings the kings of England could not be responsible; and while it was specified in the present treaty as excluded from the agreement, Lorn in Scotland was in like manner exempted, either by way of balancing the ac-

¹ Buchanan, lib. xii. 52; Drummond, pp. 155, 156; Hume, *History of the Houses of Douglas and Angus*, i. 379.

count, or because its reputation may have been little better than that of Lundy. The foreign powers included in the benefits of this truce, if they were willing to assent to it, on the part of England were Castile, Leon, and Arragon, Portugal, Austria, and Bretagne; and on the part of Scotland, France, Denmark, and Gueldres. To unite the two kingdoms more closely together a royal marriage was agreed between James Duke of Rothesay, heir of the Scottish throne, now in his fourteenth year, and Anne de la Pole, only daughter of the Duke of Suffolk and niece of Richard III.¹ This marriage, so abundant in the promise of peace, was acceptable to both nations, and was considered so certain that the Lady Anne had already assumed the title of Duchess of Rothesay.² Such concord and union was only fatal to the Duke of Albany, whom it bereaved not only of all hope of English aid, but even of a safe and peaceful home in England. He appears, however, not to have awaited the trial. After his flight from Kirkconnel he hovered for a short time upon the Scottish borders at the head of a small band, but equally neglected by the Scottish lords, who gave him no invitation to return, and by the English king, who, according to the terms of treaty, could no longer give him countenance or protection. In utter despair he retired to France, where he found a hospitable reception, but had no longer any influence to disturb the affairs of his royal brother or native country. And yet, after years of this compulsory peacefulness had been endured, his end was one of violence, for at a tournament, and while running a career against the Duke of Orleans, he was mortally wounded in the head by the splinter of a lance. He left a son, John, who was afterwards regent during the minority of James V. of Scotland.³

The condition of the Scottish kingdom and the stability of the Scottish throne were now apparently of the most hopeful character; and the proceedings of the parliament which assembled in the earlier part of 1485 give a higher idea of its legislative wisdom, as well as of the state of the country, than these parliamentary sittings had hitherto afforded. Its first care was the conclusion of the proposed marriage between the Duke of Rothesay and the Lady Anne de la Pole; and an embassy commensurate with so important an event, consisting of a bishop, an earl, a lord of parliament, an honourable and wise priest, a knight who was a baron, and a squire who was also a baron, with a sufficient retinue, was decreed to be sent to

the court of England for the settlement of terms. The old rule of holding justice-ayres twice a year was repeated, at which notorious trespassers were to be tried without exception and justified [executed] without remission,—“which the parliament understand,” it is naively added, “would be great cause to the common good and welfare of the realm.” An embassy was to be despatched to Rome with instructions drawn out in full, among which were a confirmation to be obtained from the pope of the alliance with France, and also of the treaty with Denmark concerning the transference of the Orkneys and Shetland to the Scottish crown. With these several affairs belonging to the interests of the Scottish Church were connected, and the royal right to the nomination of bishoprics, of which the Scottish kings were peculiarly jealous; and, either in a spirit of bountiful liberality or having certain affairs of his own to adjust at Rome, Archbishop Schevez undertook to conduct the mission at his own expense. In the same cautious spirit against the encroachments of the papal power the act of the preceding reign was renewed by this parliament, which made it treason for any churchmen to purchase benefices at the court of Rome the presentation to which were the right of the crown; and all who aided and abetted such purchasers were to be visited with the same punishment as the offenders. Of other regulations there was one for the proper settlement of the fishery of the river Esk, which had been a ground of debate and contention between the Borderers of England and Scotland, but the final right to which was now to be settled between the two countries by amicable examination. The punishment of the late abettors of the Duke of Albany was called for, and the king had to engage himself to grant no respite nor pardon for the space of two years. Strict regulations were made for the purity of the coinage, which had been so greatly debased during the short period of Cochrane’s ascendancy; the black money was to be called in, and good money given in exchange. An apparently trivial matter, but one on which the comfort of the lieges greatly depended, was also the subject of legislation. At the numerous ferries throughout the kingdom the fares had become so extortionate as to have doubled or even trebled their former amount. It was now decreed by the Lords of Articles that the old fares should be established, while heavy penalties were to be inflicted upon those ferrymen who refused to receive them.⁴

Although a revolution in England succeeded, by which Richard III. was hurled from the throne, and a new dynasty, that of the Tudors,

¹ Rymer, xii. pp. 236, 244, 250.

² Lesley, p. 53.

³ Buchanan; Drummond; Lesley.

⁴ *Acts of the Parliaments of Scotland*, ii. p. 171.

established, the change produced no difference in Scotland. Henry VII. on his accession needed peace as much as his predecessor had done, and was equally careful to maintain it, so that one of the first events of his reign was to establish a three years' truce between the two kingdoms as a preparative to a lasting pacification. The same tolerant spirit on the part of England enabled James to recover the castle of Dunbar by dislodging the English garrison without infringement of the public tranquillity according to the terms of agreement with Richard III. A melancholy event that followed, but the precise date of which is uncertain, was the death of Margaret of Denmark, the amiable and popular queen of James III. The notices of her among our early historians are so brief that we are unable to trace the amount of her influence either in public affairs or upon the character and proceedings of her husband. But that it could not have been trivial or useless may be suspected from the errors which were crowded into the rest of this reign, and the disasters by which it was abruptly terminated. James, however, had no purpose to remain a widower, and before his year of mourning had expired a negotiation was on foot with England for his marriage with Elizabeth, the widow of Edward IV. This, too, was but part of a three-fold royal alliance, as by the same treaty his two sons, the Duke of Rothesay and the Marquis of Ormond, were to marry two daughters of Edward. These unions were to form the basis of a lasting peace between England and Scotland, while the ultimate possession of Berwick, the only bone of contention between the two kingdoms, was to be settled by amicable congress.¹ We can easily imagine how cordially Henry VII. listened to these proposals, by which he would have been rid of those members of the house of York whom he regarded with fear and suspicion, as well as of their mother, whom he heartily hated and despised. But far other events than marriage festivals were already closing upon the royal family of Scotland, and the project only served to show how earnestly the good and the wise of both countries were longing for a mutual agreement, and how little chance there still existed for its accomplishment.

The storm in which the reign of James was to close was preceded by a treacherous sunshine, only to make its coming the more terrible and astounding. Scotland, now an entire and compact kingdom, was at peace with England, and had no ground of dissatisfaction. She was in friendly alliance with France, Flanders, and Denmark. As for James himself he was freed

from his dangerous rivals, for Albany had died in exile, and Earl Douglas was imprisoned in a cloister. He had three sons who were growing up to be the supports of his throne and perpetuators of an unquestionable dynasty. But beneath this tranquil surface there was a groundswell, by the force of which he had been silently drifting for years to certain destruction. This arose from the factious and ambitious aristocracy, to whom his peaceful spirit and parsimonious habits, his unsocial seclusion, and the studies to which he was devoted were more revolting than the fierce warlike energy of his father, or stern impartial justice of his grandfather, although these qualities had so often checked them in full career and made them stoop to kingly rule. They could not also be at ease when they remembered the affair of Lauder Bridge, and bethought themselves that their sovereign was only waiting for revenge, and quietly watching for the opportunity. And what might not be dreaded from such a peaceful observant king under whom the great leaders of their order, Albany, Mar, and Douglas, had already fallen? The motive of self-preservation, as well as that of ambition and their wonted impatience of restraint, were enough to unite a large portion of the nobles against James as they had done against his predecessors, and to adopt every means of increasing their influence and multiplying their resources for the approaching struggle. That they had been already tampering with England, and had received covert encouragement from Henry VII., is probable from the tortuous policy of that monarch, and his unwillingness to restore Berwick, which James was repeatedly demanding. But that the faction had already contemplated the design of winning over the young Duke of Rothesay to their party and setting him up as the rival of his own father, is evident from the readiness with which he soon afterwards joined them in arms and countenanced their hostile proceedings. The princely boy, although already only fifteen years of age, was old enough to deliberate between the obligations of filial duty on the one side and the allurements of ambition on the other, and make his choice for evil or for good.

In this state were matters when James III. assembled his last parliament. It met on the 1st of October, 1487; and according to the list the attendance of noble members was more than usually abundant. Every enactment, indeed, was now of paramount importance, in consequence of the weight it might bear in the approaching trial; while of the parties who were assembled, it is evident from their proceedings that more were on the side of the king and the established order of affairs than those who were

Rymer, xii. 285-316, 329.

eager for innovation, anarchy, and civil war. In opening the proceedings it was announced that the king pledges himself of his own free-will to protect the commons from the oppressions of the higher classes and preserve the public peace in general—and therefore, that for the next seven years to come no remissions or respites should be granted for “treason, murder, burning, ravishing of women, violent reif [robbery], slaughter of forethought, common theft, and reset of common theft and false coining;” and to enforce this strict and even-handed justice, one or two high officials were to be appointed on the south side of the Forth, and as many on the north. It was promised also by the nobility on their part that they would aid these magistrates to the full extent of their military power and resources in bringing all such offenders to trial and execution. They also engaged and promised, each one for himself, neither to protect nor shelter any of their kin or adherents so offending, or countenance them, or appear with them at the bar to overawe the course of justice. After several other precautions to hinder the escape of culprits and ensure their punishment—precautions which must have been distasteful to these lords of the strong hand, who were thus disarmed of their chief weapon and reduced to a war of equality—enactments were made whose tendency was the promotion of the interests of commerce and the elevation of the middle classes according to the little light which as yet had been thrown upon these complicated and unwarlike matters. It was resolved that an embassy, consisting of a priest and two burgesses, should be sent to the Emperor of Germany for the suppression of letters of marque, the expenses of this embassy to be defrayed by the Scottish merchants themselves. None were to trade to Holland, Flanders, or Zealand, except “famous and worshipful men,” having each half a last of goods in the vessel, under a penalty of ten pounds. A meeting of the commissioners of all the burghs was to be held once a year at Inverkeithing, to deliberate upon the improvement of commerce and the interest of their respective towns, while those who omitted to attend were subjected to a fine. At this parliament the lands of March and Annandale, which had belonged to the Duke of Albany but had been forfeited by his treason, were annexed to the crown.¹

These measures, wise and just though they were in themselves, were certain not only to be defeated through the powerful interests which they subverted, but to recoil upon the head of their author. The parliament after these pro-

ceedings was adjourned till January (1488), and during the interval there was sufficient time to digest them into gall and wormwood. On the reassembling of the three estates James increased the alarm and indignation of his enemies by creating his second son Duke of Ross, as if he meant to appoint him to the royal succession instead of the Duke of Rothesay, who was the favourite of the faction: he also strengthened his party by elevating the barons Drummond, Crichton of Sanquhar, Ruthven, and Hay to the rank and place of lords of parliament. But there was a measure which created greatest umbrage and gave the most plausible pretext for revolt at a stage when revolt was certain to ensue. Amidst his beloved pursuits in architecture he had built at Stirling a splendid chapel royal; and in order to endow it with ample revenues for the maintenance of a well-trained choir, he annexed to it the revenues of the priory of Coldingham.² But the patronage of this priory the powerful Border house of Home had long used as a family patrimony and provision for one of their own number, and they now entered into a compact with their neighbours and allies the Hepburnes, agreeing to stand by each other against the transference, and elect a prior from each of their own families alternately as often as the office fell vacant. A fierce opposition commenced on the part of Home against the king; and when he threatened to appeal to Rome James denounced him with the severe parliamentary penalties which had been enacted against all who carried such appeals to the papal court. Finding, therefore, that better might not be, the Homes and Hepburnes became the fiercest and loudest in the coalition which now gathered into full form and consistence. The old league of Lauder was renewed; meetings were held, which, under the pretext of horse-racing, served the purposes of conspiring and military mustering; and when royal messengers were sent to them, commanding them to appear within forty days before the civil judges to answer for such assemblies, they beat the messengers and tore their missives, or appeared at the summons with such a host of friends and retainers that all thought of trial was abandoned.³

The rebellion thus ripened was delayed no longer, and the revolted lords were soon in the field. Their number, rank, and influence were such as to throw all such previous coalitions into the shade, and show the extent of that dissatisfaction which the government of James had produced. At their head was Angus, a confirmed

¹ *Acts of the Parliaments of Scotland*, vol. ii. p. 176.

² *Acts of the Parliaments of Scotland*, vol. ii. p. 180.

³ *Pitscottie*, 210-212; *Drummond*, 163-166.

rebel and malcontent, and ready to repeat the treason which had failed during his alliance with Albany; the other chief nobles of the coalition were the Earls of Argyle, Huntly, Errol, and the earl-marshal, Lords Hailes, Hume, Lyle, Gray, Glamis, Hepburne, and Drummond, with Blackader, Bishop of Glasgow, to consecrate their cause. James, warned by the unmistakable symptoms but unaware of the extent of the rebellious spirit, had adopted a few precautions, but by no means adequate to the danger. These chiefly consisted in delivering his eldest son Rothesay to Sir James Shaw of Sauchie, governor of the castle of Stirling, with charges to have him in safe-keeping and to let none enter or depart from the castle; he then collected his treasure, which he carefully deposited in the castle of Edinburgh; and having thus secured, as he thought, his two principal resources from the insurgents, he passed northward, where his chief adherents were arming in his behalf. But even this departure, otherwise so expedient, was performed in so unwise a manner as to damage his cause; for in consequence of his embarking at Leith in the ship of Sir Andrew Wood, which was known to be bound to Flanders, the report arose that he had quitted the contest and was in the act of leaving the kingdom.

As a pretext was necessary for the rebel lords, they gave out that they had taken up arms for the national liberty and independence, which James had designed to subvert by the introduction of Englishmen to Scotland, through whose aid he might establish his reign into a despotism; and they declared their purpose to dethrone and imprison him and confer the government upon his eldest son. These aspersions, which the eagerness of James for royal marriages with England seemed so strongly to confirm, were greatly fitted to promote their cause with the people at large. But not trusting in these alone, the rebellious nobles endeavoured to win over to their side the Earl of Douglas, now a peaceful monk in the monastery of Lindores, but whose mere name they thought would still be a tower of strength and might draw every Douglas to their banner. They knew not that the old man had already outlived ambition, and was not to be moved by the offers they held out of full restoration to his old rank and possessions; and besides he justly feared that the Earl of Angus, from whom the proposal came and who already held his chief estates, could have no serious purpose to restore them. He therefore earnestly dissuaded them by letters from their rebellion; and he even wrote to the principal barons of his name and family advising them to adopt the cause of the king, as

Douglas of Cavers had done.¹ But though they failed with the earl they secured an adherent of still higher consequence in James Duke of Rothesay, whom the treacherous Shaw, the governor of Stirling Castle, had delivered to the insurgents, and who was easily allured to them by the royal title they gave him and the homage they paid to him. With the prince at their head under the title of king they now marched forward with the purpose of dethroning his father, whom they branded as a tyrant and a traitor.

Amidst these alarming movements the unfortunate sovereign had not been idle. His voyage, which was represented as a flight from Scotland into foreign lands, extended no farther than the opposite coast of the Forth; and on landing in Fife he took horse for the purpose of visiting those nobles who adhered to his cause and gathering their followers under the royal standard. In this journey an incident is reported which has a strong appearance of truth. Knowing as well as the hostile nobles did the important uses that might be made of the Earl of Douglas, he repaired to the cell of the shorn captive at Lindores and besought him to come forth and be his lieutenant against the nobles, assuring him of full restitution as the reward of his compliance. Nothing was more natural than such a proceeding on the part of James, for with the head of the Douglasses on his side he might counterpoise the influence of Angus and diminish the ranks of the enemy. He could also make the application with a good grace, as he had personally been no enemy to the earl or party to his banishment from Scotland, and at last had only sent him into a peaceful seclusion when he might have brought him to the block. But the old man, who died before the close of that year, was still immovable and sadly replied, "Sir, you have kept me and your black coffer in Stirling too long; neither of us can do you any good." With equal brevity he proceeded to show that had his services been timeously used his influence with the nobles might have been available, and had the treasures of the coffer been liberally expended they could have secured good soldiers for his defence.² James turned away rebuked and humbled. He was more successful, however, with the lords of the northern districts, the chief of whom were the Earls of Crawford, Athole, Menteith, Rothes, Sutherland, Caithness, and Buchan, and the Lords Forbes, Lovat, Erskine, Maxwell, Ruthven, Kilmaurs, and Boyd. He was soon at the head of thirty thousand men, with whom he

¹ Drummond, p. 169; Lesley, pp. 57, 58.

² Godscroft's *History of the Douglasses*, p. 206. Edin. 1648.

advanced against the rebels who were stationed at Blackness, near Linlithgow.

When the two armies approached each other an instant encounter seemed inevitable; and, from the great superiority of numbers on the king's side as well as his command of the Forth through the shipping of Wood, the promise of success to the royal arms was all but certain. Under such circumstances the first or second James would at once have issued orders for the onset and extinguished the rebellion by one daring effort; but such decision was no part of the character of their unwarlike descendant; he paused midway and began to negotiate; and, offended at his pusillanimity or tender-heartedness, several of his chief nobles deserted the royal camp and retired to their homes with their warlike followers. It would have been strange, however, if such a meeting had occurred without a single blow; and an attack was made by a party of the king's forces upon the rebels, which, however, ended in nothing but a sharp skirmish that did not prevent the treaty that was soon after concluded. Not only was the season thus let slip, but fresh and better opportunity for rebellion was furnished by the liberal concessions which James made to subjects with arms in their hands. His royal authority and privileges were to be maintained as before, his personal liberty and safety respected, and his chief counsellors to be selected from the wisest and most faithful of the nobility. All those persons about the young Prince James who had given displeasure to the king were to make "honourable and agreeable amends" to him, and be secured in their lives, honours, and estates. As for the prince he was to be endowed with an honourable maintenance "at the consideration of the said lords," and with an establishment of nobles and officers distinguished for their wisdom and fidelity, for his proper security and direction.¹ In this way it was rashly conceded that there should be two kings and two courts in Scotland—a renewal of the double-family rule of Henry II. and his son Henry in England, by which all hope of royal concord was thrown to the winds and a dissension created in which father or son must perish. On the other hand it was agreed, in the name of the Duke of Rothesay, that in all time to come he should be obedient to his father, and that faithful love and tenderness should at all times exist between them. In this way these rebellious nobles were enabled, though the weaker party, to retire with all the advantages of a victory; for the king might be said to be virtually deposed by the royal privileges he had

conceded to their young leader and heir of his throne. After this unfortunate treaty of Blackness the king, as if all danger had been over, dismissed his army and returned to Edinburgh, leaving his uncle, the Earl of Athole, in the hands of the insurgents as a hostage for the fulfilment of his promises. In the same spirit of security he proceeded to invest with new honours those who had distinguished themselves by their loyalty in the late revolt, among whom the Earl of Crawford was created Duke of Montrose, Lord Kilmaurs Earl of Glencairn, while several gentlemen were raised to the rank of knighthood and had lands bestowed upon them.²

New events speedily occurred to rouse James from his security. The insurgent lords, who were or who pretended to be suspicious of his sincerity, instead of returning the young prince to his appointed guardianship, continued to retain him among themselves, while Athole, instead of being dismissed, was from a hostage converted into a prisoner. They also appear to have retained wholly or in part their retainers under arms although the royal army had been disbanded, and thus Edinburgh and its environs were soon menaced by the appearance of numerous bands of soldiers who only waited for the signal of their leaders.³ Dismayed at these unequivocal symptoms, which were wholly at variance with the late treaty, James retired to the castle of Edinburgh, which he proceeded to fortify. He also sent messages to his faithful adherents nearest at hand commanding them to repair to him with all their forces; and not trusting to arms alone, he sent envoys to the Kings of England and France and to the pope requesting their interference in his cause.⁴ The first to come to his aid were Montrose, Menteith, Glencairn, and the barons of Fife, while the more distant northern lords would speedily follow; and it was resolved that until these could join him a stand should be made at Edinburgh, whose burgesses were well affected to his cause. But unfortunately this prudent purpose was overruled by representations of the superior strength of the castle of Stirling to that of Edinburgh, and the greater facilities of that locality as a rendezvous for the northern lords and their followers. To Stirling accordingly the royal army marched, gathering as it passed onward; and the king, still unaware of the treachery of Shaw of Sauchie, repaired to the castle to demand admittance, but was rudely refused by the governor. "Where, then, is my son?" cried the king, thinking, perhaps, that

¹ *Acts of the Parliaments of Scotland*, vol. ii. p. 210.

² Scotstarvet's *Calendars*, May, 1488.

³ Drummond, pp. 170, 171.

⁴ Drummond.

either young James had returned to his former dwelling or had never left it; and he was told in reply that he was now with the lords, who had taken him away with them perforce. "False traitor!" cried the heart-broken king, "thou hast deceived me; I vow to God, an' I live, I shall be revenged on thee and reward thee as thou hast deserved." No alternative remained but battle, for the rebel forces had passed through Falkirk and were now encamped at the Torwood. James immediately marched to meet them, and found them in readiness at a place now known as Little Canglar, nigh a small brook called Sauchieburn, within two miles of Stirling and one of Bannockburn. Even this impatience for fight was probably nothing more than the result of his irresolution and want of courage. Unable to look steadfastly upon the approaching danger, he was feverishly eager to know the worst.¹

Before the hostile armies met Lord David Lindsay of the Byres, a veteran who had been trained in the wars of France, and who joined the king with a thousand horse and three thousand foot, rode up to the king mounted on a tall gray charger, and on alighting he presented the animal to James, assuring him that if he could but keep his seat the horse would outstrip all others whether in pursuit or retreat. This ominous gift the king graciously accepted, and the event was long after remembered. In consequence of the defection of the Earl of Errol, the earl-marshal, and Lord Glamis from the royal cause, and the non-arrival of the northern forces, the king's troops were inferior in number to those of the enemy; but they were full of ardour, and if skilfully commanded might have sustained an equal conflict or even won a glorious victory. But James was utterly new to war, and, as the event showed, had not even the passive courage of a common spearman. His army was divided into three battles or great bodies, of which ten thousand Highlanders under the Earls of Huntly and Athole composed the van; the second battalion, equal in number and composed of men of the westland counties, was led by the Lords Erskine, Men-teith, and Graham; while the rear was composed of burgesses from the different towns and commanded by the king in person. On learning the approach of the enemy he called for the fleet gray horse that he might ride out and observe their motions; and he saw them advancing in three divisions like his own, while the standards that rose over them proclaimed the several districts from which they came and the leaders by whom they were commanded.

But the most afflicting and appalling part of the spectacle was the third and last division, composed of the chief rebel lords and their choicest followers, having with them the young Duke of Rothesay, now recognized as King of Scotland, and with the royal banner displayed in token of his sovereignty. At this spectacle James utterly lost heart, and remembered the prophecy, now too well understood, that a lion should be strangled by his own whelps. On returning his dismay was too visible to escape notice, and his lords besought him to retire from the field and await the issue of the battle in a place of safety. But no time was allowed for such a retreat, as the adverse army had already commenced the onset. The battle was begun by a furious attack of the Humes and Hepburnes, against whom the Highland archery could make but a weak resistance; but their place was quickly occupied by a phalanx of spearmen, who made the assailants give ground until they were reinforced by the Borderers of Annandale and Liddesdale, men whose whole delight was war, to which they were trained from childhood, and who carried spears longer and heavier than those of their opponents. They charged the king's troops with terrible war-cries and resistless force, bore them back with confusion and heavy loss, and kept pressing right onward in their career towards the place where the king was stationed. This was enough for James, who turned bridle and fled. If he thus wished to comply with the advice of his nobles the moment and occasion were the worst he could have chosen. The fight, so far from being ended, had but commenced, and the chances as yet were equal. But after his departure his army, having neither leader to conduct them nor king to be protected, abated their efforts, gave way, and at last fled towards Stirling, the pursuit not being very keenly urged by their enemies now that the cause of quarrel was so unexpectedly withdrawn. The rebellious Rothesay had also soothed his conscience by giving strict orders before the engagement that no one should injure the person of his father—orders which in the ardour of battle or pursuit were not likely to be scrupulously regarded.²

In the meantime the unfortunate James, mounted on the fleet gray steed of Lord Lyndsay, was borne away from the din of fight, and carried at full speed through the village of Bannockburn. But on crossing the rivulet of Bannock at the hamlet of Milltown, a woman who was drawing water threw down her pitcher in affright and fled; the spirited horse at the sight

¹ Pitscottie, 217; Drummond, 173, 174.

² Ferrerius; Buchanan; Pitscottie.

of her vessel in his path suddenly swerved; and the king, unnerved by fear and unpractised it may be in horsemanship, was flung from the saddle with great violence, while the weight of the rich armour with which he was covered so greatly aggravated the shock of his fall that he lay without sense or motion. He was carried by the miller and his wife into the mill which was at hand, laid upon a bed, and carefully tended till he had recovered from his swoon, when he feebly asked if any priest could be had to whom he might make his confession. Ignorant of his rank they asked who he was; and to the question he incautiously replied, "Alas! this morning I was your king!" The poor woman ran to the door clapping her hands in terror and screaming for a priest to come and confess the king. A man who had neared the cottage and heard her outcry exclaimed, "Lead me to the king; I am a priest;" and he was forthwith led to the bedside. He knew James at once, and kneeling down he asked him if he thought he might yet recover; to whom the king answered, that he thought he might do so with the help of good leech-craft; "but let me," he added, "have a priest in the meantime, that I may confess my sins and receive absolution." At this the unknown ruffian, plucking out his dagger, cried, "I shall speedily absolve thee!" and with that he plunged the weapon four or five times into the heart of his victim, after which he took the royal corpse upon his back and departed no one knew whither. By whom this accursed deed was perpetrated was never afterwards discovered. Three persons were observed to follow closely upon the track of the king in his flight: these were Lord Gray, son of that Sir Patrick Gray who had assisted James II. in the murder of the Earl of Douglas at Stirling; Borthwick, a priest in Lord Gray's service; and Stirling of Keir—and between these three rested the suspicion of a foul act which none was shameless enough to acknowledge. The house called Beaton's Mill, a building of great antiquity and strength, is still shown to travellers as the place where the tragedy occurred. It was not until some time afterwards that a body was found in the neighbourhood; and on being recognized as that of the king it was interred beside the grave of his queen in the Abbey of Cambuskenneth.

The date of this brief encounter, usually called the battle of Sauchieburn, is assigned to the 18th of June, 1488. At the period of his death James III. was in the thirty-fifth year of his age and twenty-eighth of his reign. By his queen Margaret, daughter of Christiern, King of Denmark, Sweden, and Norway, he had three sons, who constituted the whole of his family: these were

James Duke of Rothesay, who succeeded him under the title of James IV.; a second son, also named James, Marquis of Ormond, who finally became Archbishop of St. Andrews; and John Earl of Mar. In personal appearance this king was tall and majestic, while his black hair, oval countenance, and dark complexion, which resembled those of southern climates, distinguished him both from his family and countrymen. These peculiarities and the questionable reputation of his mother may have given strength to the insinuation of the Duke of Albany, that James was of illegitimate birth, and therefore not entitled to occupy the throne; but we know that a similar charge, which was utterly groundless, was made against Edward IV. by his own brother, the Duke of Gloucester, and that Albany had selected Gloucester as his model and instructor.

In attempting to estimate the character of James III. we find scarcely a difficulty in the whole range of Scottish history more obscure and perplexing. From one class of our historians he receives a double share of that obloquy with which an unsuccessful and dethroned king is usually visited, and by which those who have warred against him endeavour to justify their own rebellion. He is thus described in merciless and unqualified terms as equally imbecile and tyrannical, while his private character is aspersed with the imputation of crimes that would make him a Caligula or a Nero. But by other historians, who have been equally extravagant in his justification, he appears as an amiable, virtuous man, and a wise, prudent, energetic sovereign, whose reign would have been both useful and glorious but for the insuperable obstacles by which he was constantly thwarted. From these contradictions, indeed, our deliverance would be easy had the early historians contented themselves with a simple narrative of facts as they really existed; but here unfortunately they wrote in such a partisan spirit, and so exclusively in favour of their own bias, that scarcely an event, scarcely even a date, corresponds in any two of these writers. It is amidst such difficulties and contradictions that modern historians must attempt to give a brief consistent outline rather than a full narrative of the long reign of James III., so much of which, also, was a conflicting and perplexing minority.

From this outline which we have attempted it will be seen that the chief fault of this king was the superiority of his intellectual tastes to the age in which he lived and the people whom he ruled. Had he been born two or three centuries later he would have been in his fitting place; his faults as a king would have been lightly felt while his intelligent patronage of the fine arts

might have created an Augustan age of which he would have been the presiding sun and centre. But this for Scotland—and for Scotland in the fifteenth century—was absurd, incomprehensible! Hence the scowl with which the professors of these refined pursuits were regarded by the nobles—who saw in them nothing more than quacks and jugglers, masons, tailors, blacksmiths, and fiddlers—their indignation at the king's partiality for their company, and the unscrupulous mode in which they removed them from his presence. But that James, with all his precocious love of the fine arts, lacked even an ordinary share of common prudence, was also evident from the infatuation with which he persisted in his pursuits, and made the rough remedy that followed a necessary infliction. Nor was his discretion more apparent during the rest of his reign either for the reconciliation or suppression of his indignant nobility, who combined against him and at last overthrew him. Even the closing scene of his life must have appeared most unkingly and contemptible, when for the first time in his life he appeared in arms, but at

the head of an army which he knew not how to lead, and from which he fled like a scared school-boy upon a horse which he was unable to manage, only to perish in a paltry mill and by the hand of an unknown assassin. A sovereign who so lived and died was a most unmeet contemporary for Charles of Burgundy and Louis XI. of France, for Edward IV. and Richard III. of England, and especially most unfitted for the Scots, who were still the fiercest and least refined of all the nations of Europe; and therefore he reigned uselessly and perished before his day. This regal ineptitude made his moral deficiencies stand out in stronger relief, and be the more eagerly quoted among the causes of his deposition. In this respect, too, the picture has been overcharged; yet it will be difficult to absolve his memory from the imputation of avarice, and the murder of his unfortunate brother, the Earl of Mar. Like many other feeble-minded sovereigns, he yielded to the necessities which he could not control, and became wicked as well as weak. In this alone we can find his only apology.

CHAPTER VIII.

HISTORY OF RELIGION (1424-1488).

Obscurity in the history of the Scottish Church during this period—Patriotic spirit of the previous churchmen—Their peculiar motives for patriotism—Independence of their church—Aggressions of the popedom upon its independence—Papal appointments to the bishopric of St. Andrews—The church at the accession of the Stewarts—Dependence of the Stewarts on ecclesiastical aid—Account of Walter Trail—Of Henry Wardlaw—Contest of the rival popes waged in Scotland—Martyrdom of James Resby—Of Paul Cramer—Foundation of the college of St. Andrews—State of the clergy at the period—Rights and privileges of the church—Attempts of James I. in ecclesiastical reformation—Death and character of Bishop Wardlaw—State of the church at the accession of James II.—James Kennedy becomes Bishop of St. Andrews—His upright and diligent administration—His aid to the king in the suppression of the Douglasses—Kennedy succeeded by Patrick Graham—Graham, the first primate appointed in Scotland—Aversion of the Scots to the office—Nature of their aversion—Growing corruptions in the church—Prevalence of simony under James III.—Schevez becomes Archbishop of St. Andrews—Glasgow erected into an archbishopric—Brief duration of the new ecclesiastical rule.

No period of Scottish ecclesiastical history is so scanty of events and so limited in narrative as that which succeeded the great epoch of the recovery of national independence. Before the aggressions of Edward I. we find the Scottish hierarchy united as one man against the claims of the archbishops of York, by which their church would have been reduced to a mere dependency on that of England. They were the first, as we have seen, to fight the good fight of religious freedom, and to prepare the country for that subsequent resistance by which its civil liberties were secured. When the strife of arms

had commenced with England these ecclesiastics came forward as the best friends of the national champions Bruce and Wallace, and persisted in their patriotic adherence, although it was upon the losing side, regardless alike of the vengeance of the English king and the still more terrible denunciations of the Roman pontiff. In this way we find them not only among the dissentients who protested against the usurping claims of the two first English Edwards, but also among the combatants who contended and the martyrs who suffered in the vindication of their country's freedom. But when the storm had ended, and

when such services were no longer required, the Scottish priesthood retired to their peaceful avocations and ceased to be broadly identified with public events; their mission for the time as historical actors was ended, and their church militant was militant no longer.

It is not always, however, that mere patriotism alone can call peaceful churchmen from their cells into the turmoil of battle and the penalties of deprivation; and something more than mere chivalrous or national feeling was needed. Here, then, we find that the Scottish ecclesiastics had an independence of their own to fight for, and which was well worthy of a contest. While the Scottish lords were warring against the usurpation of Edward I. the Scottish priesthood were contending against that of the pope, a more formidable enemy than the Plantagenet, and whose claims would have been ensured by the success of the English king. As yet the Scottish Church was comparatively independent of Rome, and this independence was mainly manifested in its possession of the right of election. The clergy still continued to elect their own bishops and church dignitaries, irrespective of royal or pontifical authority, and over this high privilege they had hitherto kept a watchful guard. But to tolerate such sturdy independence in any of its provinces, however remote from the seat of government, was no part of the policy of Rome. Scotland, also, hitherto so obscure and overlooked, and scarcely reckoned among the family of European nations, had now risen into importance by her successful war against England, and the influence she could exercise upon the destinies of France, now threatened with a similar trial. Her bishoprics and abbacies had also become rich holdings, the power of nominating to which would be a source both of wealth and political influence. These were sufficiently powerful considerations to attract the attention of Rome to the bleak and barren north; and to disturb this right of election was the first object of papal aggression. The experiment was commenced in 1328 as soon as Lamberton, Bishop of St. Andrews, had died. This prelate during his ecclesiastical rule of thirty years had been one of the chief supports of Robert Bruce, and afterwards of his successor; and besides this he had been so famed for his munificence, and the liberal endowments he bestowed upon the church, as showed that the mine from which he had derived his wealth was well worth exploring. A contested election also furnished the Roman conclave with a pretext for interference. At the death of Lamberton the chapter met as usual to choose a successor; but while half of the members gave their votes in favour of James Bain, Archdeacon of St. Andrews, the

other half were for Alexander Kininmont, Archdeacon of Lothian. One advantage, however, Bain possessed, which destroyed this equipoise and turned the scale in his favour; for he was in Rome at the time of the election, and on hearing of its result he applied to the pope, who by his own authority confirmed him as Bishop of St. Andrews.

In this way the first aggressive step was made with gentleness and caution; but the second, which soon followed, was of a more decisive character. After holding the office of prelate not longer than four years Bain died at Bruges in Flanders, upon which the chapter of St. Andrews was convoked for the election of a new bishop. Warned, perhaps, by their late experience, their choice on this occasion was more unanimous, and it was made in favour of William Bell, Dean of Dunkeld. But this election the pope refused to confirm, and as the brethren would not yield so far to pontifical authority as to rescind their choice in favour of another the see remained vacant for more than nine years. At length, through the joint recommendation of David II. of Scotland and the King of France, William Landels, Provost of Kinkell, was consecrated to the bishopric of St. Andrews by Pope Benedict X. at Avignon, A.D. 1341. He enjoyed his prelacy forty-four years, and during this long period endured a considerable share of the changes and troubles that distinguished it. Among these he accompanied David II. to the battle of Durham, and was there taken prisoner along with his royal master. When the ransom of the king was to be raised from the impoverished country he devoted his cares to this difficult task, and with the consent of Innocent VI. obtained from the Scottish clergy a grant of the tenth of all the ecclesiastical livings in the kingdom during three years for the purpose. Landels was equally careful about the interests of his order; and as it had hitherto been usual for the king, at the death of every bishop, to serve himself as heir to all his movable goods, this prelate obtained for them the privilege to dispose of these by testament, and was himself the first who enjoyed the benefit of the change.

The transference of the Scottish crown to the Stewart dynasty, notwithstanding its political importance, produced no ostensible change upon the church; the higher clergy still retained their place in parliaments and royal councils, and continued to perform an important part in the administration of public affairs. Such, indeed, was more or less the case over Europe at large, and it could not well have been otherwise. The learning of the age, such as it was, continued to be engrossed by churchmen; and to

them the laity were obliged to apply when the wisdom of departed ages was to be consulted for the direction of the present or the future. But independently of this common necessity there were circumstances in the case of the Stewarts which made them more devoted to the hierarchy than their predecessors had been. This, irrespective of their own inclinations, was forced upon them by the necessities of their position. Their rise had given umbrage to the proud nobility from whose ranks they had been elevated, and the only protection that remained for a Scottish sovereign was to counterpoise the encroachments of these haughty magnates by the only portion of the community that was fitted for such rivalry. The church, therefore, became the strongest defence of the Stewarts and its wise leaders the best supports of their throne. Thus it was with Robert II. and his successor; and thus still more with the Duke of Albany, whose regency was little better than a usurpation. But the churchmen were not to be purchased without an adequate price, and their political consequence was followed by liberal donations and large immunities, from which the usual consequences accrued. It was but the common history of the corruption of a national church under the allurements of wealth and power. The downward descent had already commenced in the purity and spirituality of its character, the dry-rot had entered under which the edifice was slowly to moulder into decay. While such was the condition of the churchmen themselves, the internal history of the church as to its rites and doctrines and its bearing upon the moral character of the people continued to be uneventful, or only composed of such events as were not thought worthy of record.

Amidst this overclouding it is grateful to notice one ecclesiastic, and he, too, the highest in place as in character, who rises over the gloom like a bright particular star while the night was gathering around him. This was Walter Trail, a name hallowed in our ancient Scottish history, by whom the affairs not only of the church but the state were materially directed, and of whose political proceedings notices have already occurred in another portion of our history. His promotion to the bishopric of St. Andrews was owing to an incident which shows how little the ecclesiastics of the period were exempted from the usual dangers of war, and especially of that which raged between England and Scotland. On the death of Landels, Stephen, Prior of St. Andrews, was elected bishop in his stead; but on his way to Rome to obtain the papal confirmation he was taken prisoner at sea by the English, carried to captivity in England, and died at Alnwick in

1385. At this period Trail was at Avignon studying civil and canon law, and there his reputation for learning and worth was so high that Pope Clement, on his being appointed to the Scottish see, declared, "This man deserves better to be pope than bishop: the place is better provided than the person." The biography of this eminent prelate extends over an important part of our Scottish history. He died in 1401 at the castle of St. Andrews, which he had erected, and the following inscription which was placed upon his tomb was nothing more than a justly-merited eulogy:—

"Hic fuit ecclesiæ Columna, Fenestra lucida,
Thuribulum aureum, Campana sonora."

The schism in the papacy which divided the kingdoms of Europe between rival popes could not be disregarded in Scotland, remote though it was from the scene of action; and perhaps its resemblance to a Scottish feud only the more endeared it to the affections of our northern churchmen. As might be expected, also, they supported the claimant to whom England was opposed, and entered with hearty zeal into the cause of Benedict XIII. In consequence of this recognition Henry Wardlaw, precentor of Glasgow, being resident at Avignon when the bishopric of St. Andrews fell vacant, was elected by Benedict to the see, and was received as their bishop by the Scots without disputation or scruple. The pontifical schism, after having been the disturbance and disgrace of Christendom for more than thirty years, was at length composed by the Council of Constance, which decided in favour of Pope Martin I. As of all the Christian kingdoms Scotland now stood alone in her adherence to Benedict, the Council of Constance in 1417 sent the Abbot of Pontinnac, one of their most learned theologians, to persuade the Scottish presbyters to conformity with the rest of Europe by renouncing Benedict and acknowledging his successful rival; while to oppose this formidable advocate Benedict sent one Harding, an English Minorite friar, to confirm the Scots in their allegiance to himself. The Duke of Albany and the estates were sorely perplexed with the alternative, and resolved to decide the question by the result of a public controversy, or wager of intellectual combat, which was to be held at Perth between the champions of the rival claimants. Harding chose for his text, "My son, do nothing without advisement, so shall it not repent thee after the deed." In his harangue or sermon he maintained the right of Benedict to the papal throne by every form of reasoning and mode of illustration which the schools of that age inculcated—and they were neither few nor simple—while he proved that

the papal bull demanding their submission to Martin contained ten deadly errors, and was therefore heretical and ought not to be obeyed. He was answered by Master John Fogo, afterwards Abbot of Melrose, who took for his text the apostolic precept, "Withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh inordinately." His speech was a strange jumble of texts and metaphors, but suited to the times and his auditory, as was shown by the result, for Scotland renounced the papal rule of Benedict and adopted that of his successful rival.¹

In the meantime these scandalous contentions at Rome and Avignon, in which contending popes were hating and excommunicating each other with a bitterness more intense than that of a mere secular quarrel, could not fail to excite inquiry into the origin of the popedom itself and its claims to divine and permanent authority; and the effect was the origin of the Wickliffites in England and the Hussites in Bohemia—the precursors of the Reformation. The first of these who appeared in Scotland was James Resby, an English priest and follower of Wickliff. How long he had been in the country or what was the effect of his teaching does not appear; but in 1407 he was condemned for heresy in a council of the clergy, Master Laurence of Lindores, the "Inquisitor of Heretical Pravity," being the presiding judge. From the existence already of such an office in Scotland it may be presumed that the alarm of its churchmen at the example of the Wickliffism of England must have been both sharp and immediate. Forty charges of erroneous doctrine were brought against Resby at his trial, but of these only two are specified, viz. that the pope is not the vicar of Christ, and that no one could be pope or vicar of Christ if he was a man of wicked life. These were enough; he was condemned to the flames, and the sentence was executed to the letter. After this solitary example we read no more of persecution for religion until the year 1433, when the next victim was Paul Craw or Crawler, of whom mention has already been made in another department of our history. This accomplished and pious Bohemian is allowed by the old Scottish historian Bower, Abbot of Inchcolm, to have been learned in theology and prompt in the application of Scripture; but all this was only an aggravation of his guilt, as the same authority declares, because he obstinately held the tenets of the Wickliffites and heretics of Prague. Again Laurence of Lindores, the grand inquisitor, ascended his pitiless tribunal; but

Bower, instead of giving an account of the particular charges brought against Crawler and the nature of his defence, launches out into a furious and most perverted history of the Lollards, leaving the reader to judge from these what tenets were held by the culprit and the justice of his punishment. It is worthy of notice that this interesting stranger was a medical missionary—one fittest for the office in the absence of those miraculous powers with which the apostles themselves were invested—and that from his skill in the art of healing, which is always regarded with veneration by a barbarous or half-civilized people, he was enabled to inculcate those religious truths the dissemination of which was the great object of his dangerous enterprise.² Whether Bishop Wardlaw was an active agent in the martyrdom does not clearly appear; but that he must have given his assent to the condemnation of Crawler is evident, as the trial was held at St. Andrews, the capital of his own diocese. The character of a religious persecutor he shared with the best and wisest of his age; and had he been superior to it, it must only have been to take the place of his victim and share in his fate. It is more agreeable to turn our attention to the princely and judicious munificence of Wardlaw as a public benefactor, and especially as the founder of the University of St. Andrews. By this event he attempted to introduce a new and better era into the Scottish Church by bringing education within the reach of the clergy, who hitherto had been obliged to seek it in the colleges of England, France, and Germany. That the plan did not in the first instance succeed, and that this facility in the acquirement of a learned education only made the priesthood more remiss in seeking it, was a contingency upon which neither the bishop nor any one else could have calculated.

In the foregoing account the scantiness of our Scottish ecclesiastical history is sufficiently apparent: during the period of the earlier Stewarts the incidents are few, and of these the greater part are absorbed in the great political events of the age, to which their record more properly belongs. In this dearth of particular incidents a general glance at the state of the Scottish Church previous to the accession of James I. is the utmost that can be attempted. We find, then, from casual notices among our early historians, that the following were its chief characteristics. And first, in the important affair of clerical election, we find that lay patronage was as yet of very limited extent. The bishops were elected by the chapter, and royal interference

¹ *Scotichron.* l. xv. c. 24, 25; Spottiswood's *History of the Church of Scotland*, p. 56.

² *Scotichron.* l. xvi. c. 20.

seems to have been generally withheld even in the article of recommendation. The abbots depended for election upon the brethren of the monastery. The lay ministers were chosen by the proprietors of the parish, and were either rectors or vicars. In benefices the pope could only confirm or deprive, without having the power of election or appointment, and all purchase of benefices from Rome was strictly prohibited. The usual public sermons were delivered in the vernacular, not only by the preaching friars, but also by such of the bishops and secular priests as were capable of preaching; and those sermons which were addressed to a clerical audience were in Latin. What was the general character of the popular discourses we cannot positively affirm; but if we may judge of the style of writing used by Fordun and Bower when treating of religious subjects, they must have abounded in recommendations of implicit faith in the teaching of the church and unqualified submission to its authority—of wondrous tales of the efficacy of masses, pilgrimages, and religious ceremonies, and miraculous instances of the punishment of the wicked, especially of those who despised the rule or assailed the rights of holy church. From the same examples we can conjecture that those homilies which were reserved for learned auditories must have been sufficiently barbarous and pedantic in their style, as well as Aristotelian in their arrangement and forms of argument.

In the earliest of the parliamentary records of Scotland we generally find that the first enactment was a confirmation of the church in all its wonted rights and privileges. What these were, however, has not been specified, and we can only conjecture them from the general tenor of the ecclesiastical proceedings of the period. Of these privileges the power of holding provincial councils for the regulation and government of the church in their collective capacity, instead of being subject to the control of a metropolitan, is more than once alluded to. With this was combined the independence of the national church and its complete exemption from the recognition of any ecclesiastical superior but the pope—a recognition only conceded to avoid a worse enthrallment from the archbishops of York. Another privilege was exemption from extraordinary imposts, as well as from military service, so that in trying circumstances, when the laity were assessed beyond the usual stint, the contribution of the clergy was of their own appointment, and under the character of a benevolence. In Scotland, also, as in other countries of Europe, the immunity of the priesthood from lay tribunals was established from an early period. To these privileges may be added the

authority of clerical courts in the settlement of tithes, matrimonial alliances, and testaments, and the trial and punishment of heretics. Such were the chief rights of the clergy, and they were perhaps indispensable in the rude and lawless state of society in which they originated. But it unfortunately happened that they were considered as part and parcel of religion itself, and therefore not to be changed, not to be disturbed, let society advance and improve as it might. Such has too often been the case with church formulas, which, in order to be authoritative, have been inwoven into the principles of religion and stamped with its sacredness and perpetuity. But the time was to arrive when their assumptions would be found incompatible with a higher state of civil government on the one hand, and of religious freedom on the other. Even with the accession of the Jameses this resistance had commenced, and was prosecuted in different forms until it closed with the fifth of the name by the establishment of the Reformation.

On the accession of James I. to the throne he seems to have found the Scottish Church in need of those wholesome improvements which he contemplated for the country at large. It could not, indeed, well have been otherwise, considering the license allowed under the usurped government of Albany, and that of his son, Duke Murdoch. In his parliament, therefore, held at Perth in May, 1424, it was enacted that no clergyman should pass beyond sea, or send an advocate in his stead, without special license of the king. Also no clergyman in time to come was to purchase any pension out of any benefice secular or religious, or raise any pension granted in time past.¹ He saw already, it may be, that the priesthood had become too rich and too grasping; and on taking account of his impoverished revenues and the crown lands which David I. had alienated to the church, for which he had obtained the honour of saintship, he observed with a sigh, "He was ane soir sanct to the crown!" But although James thus attempted to clip the wings of clerical cupidity, a concession followed which must have been gratifying to the hearts of the churchmen; for it was a statute against heretics and Lollards. He had seen their growing power in England, and the alarm which they had occasioned to Henry V.; and he had been taught to regard them as hostile to church and state, as the foes both of God and man. Each bishop, therefore, was to cause inquiry to be made of any such offenders lurking in his diocese, and on being found they were to be punished as the law required, while the secular arm, if needed, was to

¹ *Acts of the Scottish Parliaments*, ii. p. 6.

support and assist the kirk in their apprehension and punishment.¹ Continuing his clerical reforms he turned his attention to the monastic institutions. The two principal orders of monks in Scotland, the Benedictine and Augustine, had degenerated into such luxury, sloth, and immorality as to require a sharp exhortation; and this he administered by a royal letter, in which he severely denounced their faults and shortcomings. To shame them also by virtuous example into a better course of life he introduced into Scotland the Carthusians, monks of a stricter order and better character, for whom he erected a stately monastery at Perth, which he endowed with large possessions. But knowing that all this would be ineffectual without due attention to the fountain-head, he patronized the University of St. Andrews, watched over its proceedings, and kept lists of the most promising of its pupils as the future instructors of the church and the community.² In these efforts for the true welfare of the church James I. had an efficient coadjutor in Wardlaw, the Bishop of St. Andrews, who lived during the whole of this reign and seven years after his decease. The bishop died A.D. 1444, after having held the see thirty-five years. The princely style in which this prelate lived, and the boundlessness of his hospitality when such a virtue was more than a boastful show, have been commemorated in a well-known incident. His steward having ventured to remonstrate with him on the continual resort to his house, and the toil it occasioned to his servants in waiting upon such multitudes, besought him to give a list of those who were thenceforth to be his regular guests. The bishop assented and called for his secretary, who, on asking for the first name to set down in the roll, received for answer, "Fife and Angus"—the two most populous counties in Scotland. At this reply the pen dropped, and further remonstrance was abandoned.

If we might judge from the parliamentary enactments of the reign of James II. we are warranted in concluding that the wealth of the church had excited the avarice of the laity. This appears from an act of council in December, 1438, where the care with which it guards the property of the church shows how greatly such defence was already needed. Since it speaks of cases where "any open and public reif and spoliation either of the kirk's goods or any others happens within the realm"—we can easily see that the sacred limits of the church's property were as liable to violation as the fence of an ordinary dwelling. The enactment goes on

to state, that in such a case the party wronged was to complain to the sheriff in whose district the plunder was reset; and that if he was not strong enough to compel restitution from the trespassers he was to "blow out on them," and put them to the king's horn as rebels, and hand over the execution of the sentence to the lieutenant, who was to proceed against them as rebels, if after fifteen days had elapsed restitution was still delayed.³ It was significant of the existing state of things that sacrilege was thus classed with mere common robbery or theft. It appears that even the terrible penalty of "cursing" against the violators and spoilers of the church had lost its terrors, and that the strong arm of the civil power had to be invoked to make these ecclesiastical censures be felt. It was decreed, therefore, that none upon whom this penalty was inflicted was to be received either at court or parliament, or into the royal presence, or to enjoy the usual privileges of citizenship, but be held as an outcast and outlaw, until he had made atonement and received absolution. In 1449 it was found necessary to repeat these denunciations, and in the event of the offenders being fugitive, or not to be found, their lands and goods were to be laid under arrest, like those of ordinary bankrupts.⁴

Wardlaw, who died in 1444, was succeeded by James Kennedy, Bishop of Dunkeld, and nephew of the late king. At the time of his election to the see of St. Andrews Kennedy was at Florence, where Pope Eugenius IV. resided, to whom the Scots adhered during the schism of the popedom, and to which city the Scottish prelate had repaired to have the disorders that had crept into his native church reformed and rectified. But his efforts for this purpose were frustrated owing to the troubled state of ecclesiastical affairs on the Continent, where two popes ruled, and two church councils were held, the one at Florence, and the other at Basel, and both only unanimous in hating, reviling, and persecuting one another. Finding that his purpose could not be effected amidst such contention and confusion, the bishop returned to Scotland to his new diocese, to work out the desired improvement with his own resources. He soon showed himself to be even superior to his predecessor in public spirit, ability, and zeal. "He caused all persons [parsons] and vicars," says Pitscottie, "to remain at their parochial kirks for the instruction and edifying of their flock, and caused them preach the word of God to the people, and visit them that were sick; and also the said bishop visited every kirk within the

¹ *Acts of the Scottish Parliaments*, ii. p. 7.

² Buchanan; Spottiswood.

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³ *Acts of the Scottish Parliaments*, ii. p. 32.

⁴ *Ibid.* pp. 33, 34.

diocese four times in the year, and preached to the said parish himself the word of God, and inquired of them if they were duly instructed by their person and vicar; and if the poor were sustained, and the youth brought up and learned [taught] according to the order that was taken in the kirk of God; and where he found not this order kept, he made great punishment, to the effect that God's glory might shine in his diocese: leaving good example to all archbishops and kirkmen to cause the patrimony of God's word to be used to his own glory, and to the common weal of the poor."

But besides these pastoral duties, in which so much time and effort must have been employed, much of Kennedy's life was spent in the troubled politics of the period, in which his royal birth, high rank, and great talents, as well as the difficulties by which his youthful sovereign was surrounded, made his interference a positive duty. He is thus largely mixed up with the civil history of this reign, and its principal events were stamped with the impress of his character. Indeed, it was to him chiefly, and to his wise counsels and encouragement, that we are to attribute the success of James II. in breaking the power of the Douglasses. This was especially the case when Earl Douglas was at the head of an army of 40,000 men, with the avowed purpose of chasing James out of Scotland. The bishop led the dismayed king into his oratory, "and desired him to make his supplication to Almighty God, that he might open his eyes, that he might have the wisdom and strength to daunt his conspirators who were risen up against him contrary to the law of God and man, and contrary to the common weal of the realm. When they had both ended their supplications," continues Pitscottie, who is the narrator, "this holy bishop showed a similitude to the king, which might bring him to experience how he might invade against the Douglasses and the rest of the conspirators. The bishop took forth a great sheaf of arrows knit together very fast, and desired him to put them to his knee and break them. The king said it was not possible, because they were so many, and so well fastened together. The bishop answered it was very true; but yet he would let the king see how to break them;—and pulled them out one by one and two by two till he had broken them all; then said to the king, "You must do with the conspirators in this manner and their accomplices that are risen against you, who are so many in number, and so hard knit together in conspiracy against you, that you cannot get them broken together, but by such practice as I have shown you by the similitude of these arrows; that is to say, you must conquer and break lord by lord by them-

selves, for you may not deal with them all at once. Therefore, make a proclamation out through the realm to all such as have offended you, and grant them a free remission to be good men in time coming, and to serve your grace at this instant time in your necessity; the which being done, I trust your grace shall get more followers than the contrary party." This apologue of Esop contained the best advice that could have been given; and to the king, who was not likely to have met with it in Latin or Greek, it came with all the freshness of novelty and persuasive power of conviction. He prudently adopted the advice; and being ably seconded by the negotiations of the bishop, the success was so complete, that in a short time the Douglas was a fugitive without army or adherent.

In the confusion which ensued upon the sudden death of James II., and during the earlier stages of the minority of James III., the influence of Kennedy was exercised for the maintenance of peace and the administration of government with the happiest effect, until the debility of old age obliged him to retire from public affairs. His death seemed to have removed the chief obstacle to the ambition of the Boyds, who then stepped into power and ruled both court and country at their pleasure. The date of his death was A.D. 1466, he having been Bishop of St. Andrews twenty-two years. He was succeeded by Patrick Graham, his nephew, or, according to the account of Buchanan, his uterine brother, who had previously been Bishop of Brechin. The principal events in the life of this amiable prelate have been detailed in the civil department of this period of our history; and from these it will be seen that he had the spirit of a righteous reformer, and that he died the death of a veritable martyr. His first offence was his repairing to Rome without the royal permission, an offence prohibited by parliamentary statute, and of which his enemies gladly availed themselves. But an apology for this trespass can easily be found in the condition of the Scottish court and the troubles of the period. The corruptions of the Scottish clergy which a season of misrule had let loose could not be restrained without an authority obtained directly from the pontiff himself, while to ask permission of the boy-king for his departure was nothing else than to ask permission of the Boyds, who would have been certain to answer him with a sharp refusal. The powers with which he was invested by the papal court for the laborious and ungrateful task of a clerical reformation, and the rude manner in which his archiepiscopal and legatine offices were treated, have already been given in detail.

The erection of the see of St. Andrews into

an archbishopric was a most important event in our ecclesiastical history. Hitherto the Scottish Church, whether Culdee or Roman, appears to have been essentially republican; and if the Bishop of St. Andrews had a voice more potential in its assembled councils than the other prelates and church dignitaries, it could only have been granted occasionally and merely as a matter of courtesy. The diocese was the earliest of Scottish bishoprics, it was also the wealthiest and most influential, and its occupants were generally persons of high family and in close connection with the court. As we have also seen, its prelates were distinguished above the rest of their order by their commanding talents and political influence; and hence their more frequent appearance in Scottish history than the bishops of any other diocese. But still they were not archbishops nor yet the superiors of their brethren; and whatever influence they enjoyed beyond the others was merely by voluntary concession of the latter, and in no case demanded as a right. Hence the astonishment of foreign churches at the nondescript ecclesiastical policy of Scotland, which, whatever efficacy it might otherwise possess, had yet no metropolitan. It was a monarchy without a monarch, and as such it was wonderful in their eyes. We have already seen the eagerness of the archbishops of York to remedy this defect by extending their pastoral care over the whole northern kingdom, how sturdily and indignantly every such attempt was resisted by the Scottish clergy, and how this struggle, which preceded the war for independence, was keen enough to embitter the national conflicts that followed. And now after whole centuries of struggle, of which the Scottish motto and war-cry seemed to be "*Nolo archiepiscopari*," the strange vacuity was filled up by the appointment of Graham to the primacy. It was no doubt for the purpose of abrogating this form of government, so strange to the churches of Christendom, still more than of silencing the claims of the see of York, that the pope gave at last an archbishop to Scotland, and thus changed its church from the republican to the monarchic form. Not only its independent character would be thus effaced but the papal rule over it more effectually secured. But how was Scotland likely to brook such a transformation? Motives that are wholly selfish, sordid, and iniquitous are assigned for the almost universal resistance with which Graham, the new archbishop, was encountered at the first moment of his arrival; and these, no doubt, had their full weight. But independently of the abuses that were to be corrected and the offenders that were to be coerced and punished, another and a very important element must have influenced

the opposition. The sturdy republican or presbyterian spirit which the Scottish Church had cherished for ages was not thus to be overthrown by a papal bull; and the same spirit which had battled with England for the national independence was likely to be awakened for the independence of the kirk, let the aggressor be whosoever he might. Besides, it had been no rare event for the hard-ruled Scots to rebel against the pope himself when he sided with their oppressors; and their church, irrespective of its wide-spread corruptions, must still have had a large portion of the clergy ready to rise up in a patriotic spirit, as their predecessors had done in the days of Edward I. and Edward III. It is worthy of remark, too, that this change was not effected until the middle of the fifteenth century, when purity in the church was least prized and when resistance to papal domination had sunk into general tameness. Only a short period elapsed between the appointment of the first Archbishop of St. Andrews and the death of Cardinal Beaton.

In the meantime the corruptions of the church, which had so moved the righteous spirit of Graham, had been gathering and advancing during the minority of James III.; and notwithstanding the strict edicts that prohibited the practice of simony and guaranteed the rights of the church, a traffic in benefices had been regularly commenced by the royal favourites which was afterwards practised by the king himself. The account, indeed, which is given of the state of ecclesiastical affairs even by Bishop Lesley is indicative of the urgent necessity of a reform, as well as the hopelessness of moderate measures to effect it. Of the nature of these corruptions he gives the following instances:—The abbacy of Dunfermline having become vacant the chapter of monks assembled, and, according to ancient right and established usage, elected Alexander Thomson, one of their brethren, to the office. But notwithstanding this election the king promoted Henry Crichton to the richer charge of Dunfermline, while the pope, influenced by the royal solicitations, was pleased to sanction this new appointment. In like manner James by his own sovereign authority promoted Robert Shaw, parson of Minto, to the vacant abbacy of Paisley. "And so, then," continues the candid prelate, "first began such manner of promotion of seculars to abbacies by the king's supplications, and the godly elections were frustrated and decayed because that the court of Rome admitted the prince's supplications, the rather that they got great profit and sums of money thereby; wherefore the bishops durst not confirm them that were chosen by the convent,

neither they who were elected durst pursue their own right. And so the abbeyes came into secular abuses, the abbots and priors being promoted forth of the court, who lived courtlike, secularly, and voluptuously. And then ceased all religious and godly minds and deeds, where-with the seculars and temporal men being slandered with their evil example, fell from all devotion and godliness to the works of wickedness, whereof daily much evil did increase."¹

It was in such a congenial state of affairs that Schevez, the traducer and supplanter of Patrick Graham, succeeded to the primacy of the Scottish Church. As his predecessor still bore the title of archbishop although not permitted to exercise its functions, his rival did not succeed to office until the death of the former, upon which he received the pallium in 1478 and was publicly invested at Holyrood, the king himself and several of the nobles being present at the spectacle.² It was no wonder that a man was in such high favour at court who could cast a nativity, read the stars, and resolve hidden secrets by divination and magic. Such pretensions, boldly and cunningly maintained, were the very qualities which at that period were in highest repute, and which James III. was most disposed to value. Of the administration of Schevez as archbishop no record has been left; "but his entry being such as we have seen," observes Spottiswood, "did not promise much good." It is stated by the same historian, upon the testimony of certain authors whom he does not quote, that after the appointment of Schevez the king and the Duke of Albany were desirous that he should exchange offices with Andrew Stewart, uncle of the king, who was Provost of Lincluden and Bishop of Moray. The mere proposal of such a transfer, to gratify a personal liking or seal a family compact, shows what little respect was now entertained for the most sacred obligations in the church and the highest of its appointments. Owing, however, it may

be, to the subsequent exile of Albany and the troubles that followed, the proposal was abandoned and Schevez remained in the primacy. Another affair, however, which followed was more displeasing to the new head of the Scottish Church and not so comfortably terminated. Robert Blackader, Bishop of Aberdeen, was translated to the see of Glasgow in 1484; but, ambitious to have a primacy of his own and encouraged by the example of St. Andrews, he applied for and obtained from Pope Alexander VI. a bull for the erection of his see into an archbishopric. This was anything but grateful to Schevez, who thus found his empire divided, and a furious controversy was the consequence which was carried on both in Scotland and at Rome. Of the particulars of this contest in a matter so fitted to engender hatred, rivalry, and fierce theological debate, we have no account; but at last the claim of Glasgow prevailed, and a papal bull was obtained, dated October 9, 1488, for its erection into an archbishopric.

In this way the full authority of the popedom was at last established in Scotland, and two primates were established over its church who owed their pre-eminence to the Vatican and were bound in obedience to its interests. It must have seemed indeed a light matter to such a vast and irresistible dominion as that of Rome, which had already deposed kings and given away kingdoms, and was so soon to give away a world itself which was on the eve of being discovered, to impose in the plenitude of its power the archiepiscopal rule over such a poor and paltry country as Scotland. But in a few years more this all-controlling sceptre was to be broken, and the culminating point which had now been reached was but the cause and prelude of giddiness and downfall. And little did it matter to Scotland that ecclesiastical rulers whom it had hitherto repudiated should thus be imposed upon it when in half a century more the lordly dominion from which they derived their power was to be denounced, disowned, and in Scotland itself completely swept away.

¹ Lesley's *History of Scotland*, pp. 39, 40.

² Ibid. p. 43.

CHAPTER IX.

HISTORY OF SOCIETY (1424-1488).

Coronation oath of the Scottish kings—Coronation oath of the different orders of his subjects—A foreigner's account of Scotland at the period of James I.—Proceedings of James I. in his first attempts in national reform—State of Scottish parliaments during this period—Preponderance of the aristocracy—Enactments of James I. to equalize the influence of parliamentary representatives—Remissness in attendance on parliament—Ceremony of the riding of the parliament—Costume of the members—Modes of parliamentary proceedings—War usages and weapons of the period—Statutes for the national defence—Attempts of James I. to introduce archery into Scotland—His laws to that effect—Their inefficiency—Cannon used in Scottish warfare—Alarm beacons to give warning of English invasion—Mode of using them—Agriculture—Laws to promote agricultural industry—Laws against idleness and begging—Slow progress of agriculture—"Sorners" and "thiggers" of the period—Statutes enacted to suppress them—Domestic life in the country—Its gradual improvement during this period—Commerce—Its slow progress—Restrictions laid on it by prohibitions and imposts—Taxes on articles exported—Shipping of the period—Extent of the national traffic with the Continent—The articles of traffic—State of traffic between England and Scotland—Laws on the subject between the two kingdoms—Improvement of commerce in the reign of James III.—Just and liberal enactments to promote it—Town life and civic legislation—A town council—Contests for the office of alderman—Bonds of town councils with neighbouring noblemen for mutual protection and aid—Nature of the compact—Laws for the fortification and defence of a town—Warlike and quarrelsome spirit fostered among the townsmen—Regulations for civic watch and ward—Scantiness of civic fortifications—Regulations for cleansing the streets—Carelessness of their observance—Filthiness of towns and prevalence of infectious diseases—Market laws and regulations in the sale of provisions—Civic offences and their punishments—A town clock in Aberdeen—Town festivals and sports—Candlemas-day—Festival of the Abbot of Unreason—Its licenses and excesses—Festival of the Boy-bishop—Town minstrels—Civic gifts to distinguished visitors—Career and style of living of a city merchant of the period—Growing prodigality illustrated by his heir—Style of living of the aristocracy—Their home amusements—Their in-door life—Banquet of a royal marriage—A state banquet—A dinner in a tavern—Drinks in common use—A Scottish fair—Its festivities—Games of the nobility—Games of the commons—Costume of the commons—Costume of persons of rank—Laws to repress extravagance in dress—Dress of the nobles in the time of James III.—Specimens from the royal wardrobe—Ornaments—Dress and ornaments of the queen and ladies of rank—Hoarding disposition of James III.—Dispersion of his treasures at his death—Literature of the period—Establishment of the University of St. Andrews—Establishment of the University of Glasgow—Its laws and privileges—Eminent men of the period—James I.—Henry the Minstrel—Sir Richard Holland—Robert Henryson—Music and musical instruments—Unfortunate love of music of James III.—Painting and statuary.

The transference of James I. from a prison to a throne was an entrance into a new existence: it was a transition from a civilized to a barbarous country; from the peaceful solitudes of Windsor to the turmoils of rancorous division and fierce debate; from an easy household, of which the management could not be called his own, to the cares of the most difficult and complicated of all royalties. His coronation, if not a splendid one according to the high standard of England, amidst the pomps of which he had been reared, was yet full of pageantry as well as hearty welcome; and the coronation oath, which he took before the three estates and the throng of witnessing spectators, was boldly and briefly expressed in the following form:—"I shall be leal and true to God and holy Kirk, and to the Three Estates of my realm. And each Estate keep, defend, and govern in their own freedom and privilege, at my godly power, after the laws and customs of the realm. The law, custom, and statutes of the realm neither to eke nor to minish, without

the consent of the Three Estates. And nothing to work nor use touching the common profit of the realm, without consent of the Three Estates. The law and statutes made by my forbears, keep and use in all points, at all my power, to all my lieges in all things, so that they repugn not against the faith. So help me God, and this halidome, &c."

Having thus pledged himself to his people he received in return their oaths of fidelity and homage through their representatives, the three estates, the first of whom were the prelates, whose oath was the following:—"I shall be leal and true to you, my liege lord, Sir James, King of Scots. And shall not hear your scathe, nor see it, but I shall hinder it at all my power, and warn you thereof; your counsel helping that ye show me; the best counsel I can giving to you, when ye charge me *in verbo Dei*. And so help me God, and holy Evangelis, &c."

Then followed the oath of the nobility, which was given in the following words:—"I, A. B., become your man, as my King, in land, life,

light, and limb, and worldly honour, fealty, and lawty, against all that live and die may; your counsel concealing that ye show to me; the best counsel giving, if ye charge me. Your scathe nor dishonour shall I neither hear nor see, but I shall hinder it at all my godly power, and warn you thereof. So help me God, &c."

The oath of the third estate, which was naturally more concise, was as follows:—"I shall be leal and true to you, my liege lord, Sir James, King of Scotland. I shall neither hear your scathe, nor see it, but I shall hinder it at my power, and warn you thereof. Your counsel shown to me I shall conceal. The best counsel I can, I shall give you, when ye charge me therewith. So help me God, &c." After these the bailies and burgesses gave their oaths of fidelity to the king and the interests of the town; but the close of the oaths of these bailies differed from the others, being couched in these words:—"So help me God, and mine own hand, and this halidome, and all halidomes, and all that God made on six days and seven nights under ground and above."¹

Such were the oaths by which a Scottish king of the period was inaugurated; and how the compact was kept on either side the history of the period too well informs us. In the case of James I. the chances of perjury on both sides were multiplied from the limitations of his rule, compared with the reforms and changes which he contemplated. Even after years of toil, rewarded by not a little improvement both upon the country and its inhabitants, the aspect of affairs must still have been rude and disheartening, especially to a mind so susceptible as his, and devoted to such high purposes. What this condition was, to any except a Scottish lord or burgess, and to the manner born, will sufficiently appear from the following brief sketch of it given by Æneas Sylvius. This accomplished Italian, afterwards Pius II., who visited Scotland in 1435, after James had reigned eleven years, gives the following short sketch of the country and its inhabitants:—

"It is an island joined to England, stretching two hundred miles to the north, and about fifty broad; a cold country, fertile of few sorts of grain, and generally void of trees; but there is a sulphureous stone dug up, which is used for firing. The towns are unwalled, the houses commonly built without lime; and in villages, roofed with turf, while a cow's hide supplies the place of a door. The commonalty are poor and uneducated, have abundance of flesh and fish, but eat bread as a dainty. The men are small in stature, but bold; the women fair and

comely, and prone to the pleasures of love, kisses being there not more esteemed than pressing the hand is in Italy. The wine is all imported; the horses are mostly small ambling nags, only a few being preserved entire for propagation; and neither curry-combs nor reins are used. The oysters are larger than in England. From Scotland are imported into Flanders hides, wool, salt fish, pearls. Nothing gives the Scots more pleasure than to hear the English dispraised. The country is divided into two parts, the cultivated Lowlands, and the region where agriculture is not used. The wild Scots have a different language, and sometimes eat the bark of trees. There are no wolves, crows are new inhabitants, and therefore the tree in which they build becomes royal property. At the winter solstice, when the author was there, the day did not exceed four hours."² In the foregoing account it will be perceived that, with the exception of a few mistakes into which he fell from his short stay and limited range of observation, the accomplished Italian is borne out by all that we can gather from the general testimonies of the period. From one of his incidental notices we learn a curious kind of charity which was practised at the church-doors, and by which those who asked for bread literally received a stone; this, however, was a substantial and benevolent alms of coals bestowed upon the poor in consequence of the scarcity of wood for fuel. While new superstitions were coming into full play some of the old appear to have been departing; for he informs us that the miraculous tale of the barnacles, which the monks had invented, had now left Scotland to take refuge in the Orkneys. Disguising himself as a merchant the adventurous churchman returned through the north of England, and in its border districts he found matters greatly worse than even in Scotland itself. It was a region of hunger and discomfort, in which he could get neither wine nor bread. On a night alarm being raised that the Scottish Borderers were coming the men took to their heels; but the women refused to fly, "for they had no fear," he demurely adds, "that the enemy would do them any evil—not reckoning violation any evil at all." As we have formerly seen, the estimate was very different in Scotland, as the followers of Vienne experienced to their cost.

When he adopted the firm resolution that these discomforts should be removed or ameliorated and order introduced, though he should perish in the attempt, James I. seems to have placed great reliance upon the kingly authority

¹ Harl. MS., 4700.

² *Pii II. Comment. rerum mem. sui temporis*, quoted by Pinkerton, vol. i. p. 150.

as he had seen it exercised in England, and to have hoped that by prudent management it might be also made available for the reformation of his own kingdom. But for such a purpose it was necessary that this authority should be vindicated from the contempt into which it had fallen during the two previous reigns, and amplified in its privileges, which had hitherto been so scanty, so scrupulously conceded, and so suspiciously watched. Another sovereign, in such a case, would have relied upon the prestige of his family, the strength of his alliances, and the resources of his revenues to collect such a military front as would bear down opposition and carry him onward in his purposes by the arguments of force and violence, according to the use and wont of royal reformers in general. But we know that none of these means were at his disposal; he was a stranger and all but an alien, and he stood alone and unsupported amongst a proud, selfish nobility, with a degraded crown and a pillaged exchequer. To turn therefore his mere titular royalty into a force that should be felt, feared, and obeyed, he wisely took his stand upon the old institutions of the kingdom—upon the parliament and the laws—the only resources that were left him, and through which alone his purposes could be carried into act and use. Hence the numerous parliaments that distinguished his reign beyond all former precedent. Hence the peculiarly legislative form that characterized their enactments, indicative of a new and, as it might turn out, a better character than the old. And as these enactments would have been useless unless they had been generally understood, James introduced an innovation by which all classes could learn the duties required of them and the penalties of disobedience. Hitherto they had been published in Latin, which scarcely any save the clergy understood; and even as yet the parliamentary statutes of England were embodied in Latin and Norman French. But James ordered them to be issued in the Scottish tongue, and even rehearsed to all who were unable to read, so that nothing but deliberate perversity could prevent their fulfilment.

In looking at the state of our national parliaments during this period a tolerably full idea can be gathered from the large publication entitled *The Acts of the Parliaments of Scotland*, and the numerous notices of their proceedings in our early historians. The number of members was in all about a hundred and ninety, but it would appear that seldom above half that number vouchsafed their attendance. Of the three estates, consisting of lords spiritual, lords temporal, and commons, the first was composed of bishops, priors, and abbots; the second of

lords of high rank and title, who for the purpose of holding a seat were created Lords of Parliament; and of barons or lairds, who sometimes were almost as numerous as both clergy and peers united; and the third estate, which was the smallest and of least account, was composed of freeholders and commissaries of the burghs. They represented, indeed, the commons; but as yet the commons of Scotland were by no means so important as were their brethren of England. Thus the chief parliamentary weight was with the aristocracy, who were generally more powerful than king and commons united, and who, in passing a law, often considered it as an obligation upon the people only, from which they themselves were happily exempted. It was no doubt from this arrogance that at the first of these parliaments held by James I. they were so ready to accede to the condemnation of the highest of their own order, believing the sentence to be but an empty threat, which none could have the hardihood to enforce. It was in this confidence also that Sir Robert Graham dared to lay hands upon and arrest the sovereign himself, believing that the chiefs of the second estate would confirm the deed as they had promised, in which case James would assuredly have been brought to trial, and perhaps to the same fate as his descendant Charles I. What added to the power of the nobility also was that, instead of having separate houses or halls of assembling, where the burgesses might have learned to hold their own discussions and to vindicate their own rights, all the estates were assembled in one large apartment, where the commons were obliged to protest with trembling and in bated breath, or follow the lead of their lordly superiors.

It was no doubt for the purpose of rectifying this inequality, and preparing the commons for a full voice in the government, that James I. issued the following decree from the parliament held at Perth on the 1st of March, 1427:¹—

“The king, with consent of his whole council general has statuted and ordained that the small barons and free tenants need not to come to parliaments nor general councils, so that of each sheriffdom there be sent chosen at the head court of the sheriffdom two or more wise men after the largeness of the sheriffdom, excepting the sheriffdoms of Clackmannan and Kinross, of the which one shall be sent of each one of these; the which shall be called commissaries of the shire. And by these commissaries of all the shires shall be chosen a wise and an expert man called the Commons’ Speaker of the Parliament, the which shall propound all and sundry needs

¹ *Acts of the Parliaments of Scotland*, vol. ii. p. 15.

and causes pertaining to the commons in the parliament or general council; the which commissaries shall have full and plain power of all the rest of the sheriffdom under the witnessing of the sheriff's seal, with the seals of diverse barons of the shire to hear, treat, and finally to determine all causes to be propounded in council or parliament. The which commissaries and speaker shall have their costage of them of each shire who owe appearance in the parliament or council. And of their rents there shall be an equal assessment upon each pound to the contribution of the said costs. All bishops, abbots, priors, dukes, earls, lords of parliament, and bannerets will be excepted, whom the king directs to be summoned to parliament by his special precept." Such was the plan of the legislator-king, by which a more equal representation of the community at large was to be effected in consequence of the diminution of numbers in the second estate and augmentation in the third. But this plan of a Scottish House of Commons was never reduced to actuality until 1587, when great interests were at stake by which the whole people were vitally affected, and in which it would have been criminal to sit still. In the meantime the barons preferred to be identified with the peers, with whom they were connected by bands of man-rent, rather than to take their place only as landed gentlemen and the legitimate representatives of the commons; while the shires were probably withheld from the election of their commissaries on account of the "costage" with which the privilege was to be accompanied. In this manner the Scottish parliament continued to be an aristocratic government during the whole of the present period.

As the summoning of parliament was a royal prerogative the prelates, high clergy, and nobles were called by letters under the king's seal; and the commons by charges from the chancery addressed to the sheriff of each shire. But whatever might be the urgency of the summons, or the interest at stake, the attendance in general fell greatly short of those who were entitled to the sitting. And for this remissness many causes might be alleged. During the frequent Scottish minorities, when there was "woe to the land," because its king was a child, the summons was issued in the name of a divided regency, whose authority was little respected, and whose edicts had seldom either force or permanence. To travel to Stirling, Edinburgh, or Perth was not always safe even in the best of times, when every lord or laird had generally half a dozen of hereditary feuds on his hands which had descended to him with his ancestral traditions and family muniments. Even danger apart—which, however, could sometimes give a relish to the

journey—there were discomforts reckoned worse than blows and bloodshed, from the scantiness of inns, and from the execrable roads, or utter want of roads, which made travelling, whether on horseback or on foot, an annoyance throughout the whole of Scotland. Some under the excuse of sickness, distance, or occupation might plead for non-attendance; others from hatred of feudal enemies with whom they should have to sit and deliberate, or a spirit of opposition to whatever faction at the time predominated, and might prefer the privilege of grumbling at large among their own menials and retainers. Besides, there were no immunities attached to all this trouble of attendance and deliberation—no additional rank, no exemption from arrest—and in the case of the poorer members, no requital for the outlay of a journey that might swallow up half a year's living. Taking into account such causes as these we need not wonder that a seat in parliament was still so lightly prized, and so frequently avoided.

In spite, however, of these numerous obstacles we can imagine that more than a hundred members have continued to struggle onward to the capital, and have arrived there a day or two previous to the opening of the session. A solemn ceremony called the "Riding of the Parliament" was to inaugurate the opening. It was one of the few great spectacles of the day, and as such was certain to fill Edinburgh with expectant throngs, who had made a joyous holiday for the occasion. The members assembled at an appointed place of concourse, and rode in procession to the building where the parliament was to be held, accompanied with heralds in their picturesque array, and trumpets sounding before them; and first in the procession were the representatives of burghs, each having a pair of cloaks [a cloak of two sleeves?] of blue cloth furred to the feet, open on the right shoulder, which was similarly furred, and a hood of the same material. Next came those barons who were lords of parliament, their costume being a mantle of red opened in front, and lined with silk, or furred with *cristie gray*, *griee*, or *purray*, with a hood also of red cloth, lined in the same fashion as the mantle. After these came the members of highest rank; the prelates, lords, earls, and dukes, of whom the seculars wore mantles of brown *granit*—a cloth probably of superior fineness—open before, lined with white fur; and trimmed in front of a hand's-breadth, and down to the belt, with the same furring; and these having little hoods of the same cloth hanging upon the shoulders. Amidst this rich and diversified attire so specifically prescribed for the distinction of the different ranks, no mention is made of that of the prelates; but this was a

matter with which secular legislation did not dare to intermeddle; and it is probable that they were left to their own gorgeous and graceful costume, which must have shown favourably even amidst the attire of the highest and proudest nobility. Accompanying these different classes, and probably among the ranks of their clients for the time, rode the representatives of the law—the advocates, for-speakers, or procurers, who were required to be clothed in a habit of green in the fashion of a tunicle [short coat], with the sleeves open, like those of a tabard. These particulars of costume were weighty affairs, for they were strictly specified by act of parliament; the king had been enjoined “to make a pattern of them;” and if any member, whether noble or commoner, presumed to dress otherwise, he forfeited ten pounds to the king, and if a lawyer, he was amerced in half that amount.¹ But the procession is not yet ended; for last of all came the king himself attended by his guards, with three chosen nobles carrying before him “the honours,” that is to say, the crown, sceptre, and state sword. Such was a Scottish riding of parliament, so full of ancient remembrances, and to the form of which the people so affectionately clung even after their separate national existence had utterly passed away.

In this order and attire the procession rode onward until it reached the building in which the parliament was to be held; and at the door of the hall the lord high constable was in waiting to receive the members as they alighted. In what manner they were marshalled to their places, or what parts of the hall the different estates occupied, has not been stated; but it may be presumed that the clergy were seated on the right, and the peers on the left of the throne; while in the middle of the throne, and at the head of the long table, were the clerk of parliament and other officials, whose services were required by the forms of the house. As for the burgesses we know not what place was assigned to them in that august presence; but, from their rank and the smallness of their numbers, it is probable that their seat was of inferior honour—without the bar, perhaps, and near the bottom of the hall. As so many dignitaries of the church were present, and as a declaration in favour of the rights of the church was a frequent prelude to the parliamentary enactments, it may be conjectured that some devotional form was used previous to entering into business. At all events a short speech at the opening was usually delivered by the lord-chancellor or secretary; and as these officials were generally clergymen the harangue probably partook of the nature of a

sermon. The work of the session then commenced; but as the power of debating was still a rare faculty, and as speech-making was reckoned the proper work of scholars and priests, the principal business consisted in appointing committees of Lords of the Articles for the drawing up of laws and enactments; and this being done the members were at liberty to return to their homes, leaving the ratification of the committee work to their next annual meeting. Even this postponement was sometimes unnecessary, as the chancellor and his coadjutors had fashioned the whole business previous to the meeting, so that nothing more than a simple assent was necessary without the hinderance of demur or disputation. In this summary way the whole annual business of parliament might be despatched in five, or at most in fifteen days, and the burgess be restored to his trading-booth and the lord to his castle. But from such careless haste it may be seen how little as yet the nature of parliamentary rule was understood, and how unlikely that its laws would be respected and obeyed. Hence the necessity of a frequent repetition of statutes by successive parliaments. Hence the severe penalties denounced against those who were appointed to carry them into effect—the sheriffs, mairs, bailies, crowners, serjands, provosts of burghs, and their deputies, who, either from sloth or fear, had allowed these laws to be broken and the trespassers to go free. Hence also the spectacle, not rarely exhibited, of a royal messenger displaying his red wand of office and blowing his horn of summons until his face was as red as his wand before a locked and bolted gate, while the master grinned in scorn or defiance through a loophole of his tower.

Of the war-usages and weapons of this period little needs to be said in addition to what has been stated in former chapters. The chivalrous tournaments of former days had now become more unfrequent than ever, so that the splendid passage of arms in 1449 between the knights of Burgundy and Scotland was the only notable affair of this nature which has been thought worthy of mention in our annals. The panoply of knighthood was now complete from head to heel, and consisted wholly of plate armour, with the exception of the *garde-des-reines*, a short petticoat of chain-work to guard the rider on horseback, in addition to the cuisses with which his thighs were protected. Of the armour of the commons the parliamentary enactments were so frequent, that we have the weapons of every man specified according to his rank and holding. It appears, also, that the Scots were still so unskilful in their fabrication, that by an act of James I. (A.D. 1425) every merchant passing beyond sea for traffic was to bring home, according to the

¹ *Acts of Scottish Parliaments*, A.D. 1455 and 1457, pp. 43-49.

amount of his cargo, harness and weapons, with spear-shafts and bow-staves.¹ It was ordained by a statute of James II. (A.D. 1456) that on a royal summons for the national defence, whether by lighted beacon or sound of trumpet, every man of land and goods should be promptly horsed and harnessed for the place of meeting according to his rental and possessions. Thus every one, it was stated, whose effects extended to the value of twenty marks, was to be equipped at least with a jack, having sleeves to the hands, or else a pair of splents; and with a sellat (steel cap) or pricked hat; a sword and a buckler; a bow and a sheaf of arrows. But if he could not use the bow he was then to have an axe; and a targe either of leather or firm board, with two bands upon the back.² As for the spear, the great national arm of Scottish warfare, it was ordained by James III. (A.D. 1471) that no merchant should import spears less than six ells in length, and no bowyer in the kingdom make them shorter on pain of forfeiting them, and being punished besides at the royal pleasure. It is probable that such a length of weapon was beginning to be felt inconvenient, and that already the spear was in some cases abbreviated. It was at all events by the superior length of their spears that the men of Annandale bore down the king's troops, and mainly decided the battle of Sauchieburn. It was decreed by the same statute that every yeoman who could not handle the bow should have a good axe and a target of leather "to resist the shot of England."³

As it was by the English bow that the defeats of the Scottish armies had chiefly occurred and the conquest of France been effected, James I., himself a skilful archer, endeavoured to introduce it among his countrymen. His solicitude also was so great that it was expressed in an enactment of the first parliament held in his reign. By this it was ordained that "all men busk them to be archers from the twelfth year of their age." In every ten pounds' worth of land butts were to be set up, and especially near parish kirks; and there upon holidays the men were to come, "and at the least shoot thrice about, and have usage of archery," while defaulters were to be punished by a fine.⁴ But Bruce himself had attempted this innovation, and had utterly failed. Spearmen the Scots had hitherto been, and spearmen they would remain, so that his decree had little effect. During the subsequent reigns the enactment had been carefully continued, and the bow and sheaf of arrows specified for every muster, whether of weaponshawks or actual service; but the

yeomen were glad in every case to avail themselves of the alternative of the axe or the spear. In the parliament held in the reign of James II., A.D. 1457, an enactment on the subject of archery was as full and complete as any similar portion of English legislation. It begins with specifying that weaponshawks shall be held by the lords and barons spiritual and temporal four times in the year, and that the favourite popular amusements of golf and football "shall be utterly cried down and not used." At each parish kirk a pair of bow-marks (or butts) were to be set up, and there shooting was to be practised every Sunday. On these occasions each man was to shoot six shots at the least; and whosoever absented himself was to forfeit two-pence for drink to the shooters. This weekly practice was to last from Easter to All-Saints, and all were to be in readiness by next midsummer. It was also enacted that there should be a bowyer and fletcher in every chief town of a shire, and that the town should furnish him with stuff and graith necessary for the service of the country. The penalty on playing at golf and football was a fine to the baron; and if he neglected to levy it this was to be done by the king's officers. If the parish was a large one it was decreed that there should be three, four, or five bow-marks in the most convenient places, and that each man within the parish above twelve years of age and under fifty should there practise archery; while those who had passed the age of threescore were kindly permitted to "use other honest games, as effeirs."⁵ Thus far went the law—but only to remain a dead letter; for the Scots persisted to the last against the long and laborious apprenticeship that would have been needed to match them against the archery of England. The use of the bow was resigned to the Highlanders, with whom it seemed to have been a common weapon from the earliest period; but while England had reduced archery to a science, and brought the weapons to their highest state of perfection, the Highland bow still retained its original rudeness, being little more than four feet in length, while the string was drawn only to the breast. This was very different from the English yeoman, who handled a bow six feet long, and so stiff that few other men could even bend it; who drew the string to his right ear, and sent the shaft a flight of twelvescore yards, and with a force against which plate and mail were often a useless protection.

Along with the bow the use of cannon employed the attention of the Scottish legislature. The first pieces used by the Scots had probably

¹ *Acts of the Parliaments of Scotland*, ii. p. 9.

² *Ibid.* ii. p. 45.

³ *Ibid.* ii. p. 100.

⁴ *Ibid.* ii. p. 6.

⁵ *Acts of the Parliaments of Scotland*, ii. p. 48.

been imported from France or Flanders; but as they must have been both unwieldy and costly, and very dangerous to handle, the parliament of James II., A.D. 1456, turned their attention to the fabrication of a lighter kind—perhaps contemplating their use in the movements of battle as a counterpoise to the English archery. Their pieces, however, could have scarcely been larger than those which were afterwards called *patereroes*. The great barons of the land were to be requested by the king to make “carts of weir,” each cart or wagon to carry two guns, and each gun to have two chambers, with all their necessary apparatus, and “a cunning man to shoot them;” but as it was easier to hoop a few iron bars together than to make a skilful artilleryman, the proviso was wisely added, “If they have no craft in the shooting of them, that now they may learn, ere the time come that will be needful to have them.”¹ It was from this want of skill that, four years afterwards, James II. himself perished before the walls of Roxburgh. This disastrous event, and the absence of war, appear to have made the nobles remiss in the cultivation of gunnery until A.D. 1471, when the Scots were apprehensive of a war with England. In the enactment of parliament during that year the apprehension was announced, and not only the barons but the prelates were reminded of the necessity of making carts of war for the national defence—to which the lords readily assented, and promised that it should be done.² Three years of neglect appear to have succeeded, for in 1474 the memories of the defaulters had to be quickened by a fresh parliamentary enactment. “It is thought expedient, statuted, and ordained,” it sharply purported, “anent the carts of war, that they be made as was promised to our sovereign lord of before, and that they be ready made betwixt this and Lambmas;—and whoso fails herein, to be punished at the discretion of the king’s Highness.”³ While the casting of cannon and the practice of gunnery were thus neglected in the land service, and all the more especially that there had been little to call them into use, the case was different at sea, where Scottish privateering was becoming a plentiful source both of renown and emolument; and before this period had ended the ships of Admiral Wood and the Bartons yielded to none, whether English, Portuguese, or Flemish, both in weight and completeness of guns and dexterity in using them.

As Scottish warfare had been wont to occur so exclusively in the form of an English invasion the expedients adopted by the Scots to

avoid being taken at unawares were both simple and effectual; and the coming of the enemy was announced by lighted beacons placed in such conspicuous situations that whole districts could be warned in an instant, and the kingdom itself in a few hours. The chief places to be watched were certain fords betwixt Roxburgh and Berwick, by which the English armies usually entered Scotland; and on the coming of the enemy the watchers were to light their bale-fires, so that they might be seen and repeated at Hume Castle, and then to repair thither in person and give full particulars of the event. The amount of the danger and strength of the invaders had also their correspondent tokens. Thus one fire lighted announced that the English were coming; when two were lighted at once they proclaimed that the movement was no feint, but that they were coming indeed; but when four were kindled each beside the other, and all at once, like four candles, these telegraphs announced that the English invaders were in great force, and they carried their warning as far as Haddington, Dunbar, and Dalkeith. The same tokens were to be watched and repeated from Edgerhope Castle, and by this all Lothian could be warned, and especially the castle of Edinburgh, which in like manner was to raise four beacons, so that Fife, the country to the east of Stirling, and the east of Lothian to Dunbar, might be instructed by the signal and mustered for the national defence. The hosts thus promptly assembled were to repair to the Tweed, where the enemy must cross; and there, adds the statute, “we shall, God willing, be as soon ready as they.” While thus intelligence was conveyed through the inland counties signals were also to be lighted at Dudhope-Law and North Berwick-Law to warn the inhabitants along the coast.⁴ In this manner the great national war telegraph was reduced to a complete system during the reign of James II., and the means of resistance quickly collected, whether against a petty raid or a wholesale invasion.

The condition of agriculture at the entrance of James I. into Scotland caught his observant eye, and suggested the necessity of improvement. The forests were rapidly disappearing, so that wood for fuel was becoming a scarce commodity; but the land thus cleared was left waste or only used for pasture, while the shifting prices of grain, and the frequent famines not only of districts but the whole kingdom, bore witness to the imperfection of the national husbandry and remissness in agricultural zeal.

¹ *Acts*, ii. p. 45.² *Ibid.* p. 99.³ *Ibid.* p. 106.⁴ *Acts*, ii. p. 44.

Even the precarious raids upon the overflowing granaries of England, upon which the Scots had so often depended when their hunger was at the keenest, were no longer available, on account of the frequent truces between the two nations, and the improving state of society in general, which made such military maraudings for a subsistence unwise and discreditable. To make Scotland independent by being self-sustaining was his great aim; and his statutes to this effect were both numerous and stringent over the whole course of his reign, of which the following, enacted during the first year of his reign, is a specimen:—"It is statute and ordained, that each man of simple estate, that of reason should be a labourer, have either half an ox in the plough [that is, be proprietor in half of the labour of an ox], or else delve each work day seven feet in length and seven in breadth, under the pain of an ox to the king."¹ The next statute that followed was an enforcement of this duty, being levelled against *thiggers* or beggars. By this no man was to be allowed to *thig* in burgh or landward between the ages of fourteen and seventy years, unless it was evident that he could not otherwise obtain a livelihood, which should be certified by a token from the magistrates to that effect; and all found trespassing to the contrary, after being charged by proclamation to betake themselves to honest labour, were to be burnt on the cheek and banished. Having thus enacted that every man, however lowly, who could handle a spade should work for his living, attention was directed to the farmers of a better grade, but who had hitherto been contented with the cultivation of oats and barley. Each man, therefore, who tilled the ground with a plough of eight oxen was to sow yearly at least a firloft of wheat, half a firloft of pease, and *forty* beans, under a penalty of ten shillings to the baron of the land on which he resides as often as he should fail to comply. The baron was to sow in like manner upon his own domains, on pain of forfeiting forty shillings to the king; and if he should allow his tenants to be as neglectful as himself, and fail to enforce the penalties upon them, he was to be amerced in forty shillings for every such case of neglect. In this way there was to be no connivance in idleness between landlord and tenant, but all were to be equally obedient and active. Half a century of such industry might have doubled the produce of Scotland; but we can guess how much, in one sense at least, such unwonted toil was against the grain, and how easily it might be eluded by a general agreement. Wheat, and even beans

and pease, still continued to be rarities, and famine no infrequent visitation. The other agricultural statutes of this reign were for the preservation of the green-wood and orchards, the protection of dove-cots and rabbit warrens, and the destruction of wolves and rooks.

The slow progress of agriculture, notwithstanding these energetic laws, is apparent from the statutes of the following reign. From these we learn that the country was chiefly dependent for subsistence upon foreign grain, and this even till near the close of the present period. This is acknowledged especially in an enactment of 1478 in behalf of foreign merchants, in which it is stated that "the most supportation that the realm has, is by strangers of diverse other nations that bring victuals."² An evidence of the general aversion to agricultural industry may also be found in the fact that the most important statutes on this head given by James I. had to be repeated by his successor, even to the sowing of beans and pease. From the same source we also learn the apathy by which the people were pervaded even where their best interests were obviously at stake, so that acts of parliament had to be applied in cases where nations usually need no such prompting. Thus the sowing of broom had to be enjoined, A.D. 1458, because it could be used as fodder for cattle. The burning of heath from March till Michaelmas was prohibited, that the standing corn might not be damaged. Eagles, buzzards, and hawks, though noxious enough to the farmer, were let alone until they were destroyed by act of parliament; and wolves had to be rooted out by wolf-hunts, in which the baron and all his following had to engage four times in the year under penalty of a fine, while a premium was given for every wolf's head. And yet the dearths were sometimes so severe that the food of the people rose to ten or even twenty times its usual price, and many died from hunger. The precarious state of society in Scotland, and the utter dependence of the peasantry upon their feudal superiors, made industry distasteful and long leases impossible; and he who held land only from year to year, and might be turned out at a very brief and arbitrary notice, had no motive to cultivate his farm beyond the passing exigences of the day. Full sorely was the kingdom still abiding the effects of the ambition of Edward I., and the long struggle for independence which his wild attempt had originated; and it may be questioned if even yet the land had regained the footing which it had lost since the reign of Alexander III.

¹ *Acts of Scottish Parliaments*, ii. p. 6.

² *Acts of the Scottish Parliaments*, ii. p. 119.

While Scotland was thus a land of defective agriculture and scanty harvests there were caterpillars enough to waste the produce, independent of English raids and Border reivers. These were "sorners" and "thiggers," two classes of men the offspring of the prevalent indolence and poverty, who at this period, and for long after, were a very plentiful generation in Scotland. The somners were those who lived at free quarters wherever they came. From the parliamentary statutes against them it appears that they were not always of humble station and obscure lineage, but men of good family who were too lazy to work and too luxurious to live sparsely—the very personages who had recourse to the occupations of led captains, hired bullies, toad-eaters, and patronage or legacy hunters when a more orderly state of society had succeeded. At present these men, who had neither revenue nor home, wandered about the country attended by a congenial retinue well mounted and often well armed, so that where their gentle blood failed to win an entrance they could achieve it by force. Having thus thrust themselves upon the hospitality of their entertainer they made good their footing as long as the best of his barns or flocks remained; and when these were eaten up the locust-cloud passed away, to honour some other district with a similar visit. But besides the undefended hamlets and granges, the remote monasteries and religious houses were tempting marks for sorning; and upon these accordingly such bands often quartered themselves, regardless of the remonstrances of the monks or the terrors of bell, book, and candle. At the earliest parliament held by James I. a prohibition was issued against these oppressive practices, but so little was it regarded that by the succeeding reign a more severe and specific decree had to be enacted against "sorners, over-liers, and masterful beggars with horses, hounds, or other goods"—an array and equipment of beggary altogether unique. Upon these desperadoes of charity all magistrates were commanded to lay hand, confiscate their horses, hounds, and property, and put them into the king's ward, "until the king should have said his will to them." The same statute also takes notice of a less distinguished class of somners, who pursued their occupation upon a smaller scale, and who are characterized as "those that make them fools that are not—bards—or such like others runners about." Feigned idiocy or insanity seems to have been a frequent cloak for begging, as appears from the notices of the period, while the honoured occupation of the bard had sunk into that of a mere wandering singer of ballads—an Autolycus whose voice made free

with every man's ears, and his hand with every man's pocket. Such, in the fifteenth century in Scotland, were the men who lived by their wits, who continued onward for ages, and who, in the nineteenth, have only changed their mode of operation. And terrible was to be the doom of these feigned fools, bards, and vagabonds, wherever they were found. The sheriffs, bailies, and officers were to make strict inquisition after them, and confine them in prison or in irons as long as they had "any goods of their own to live upon;" and if they were poor rogues who had nothing, then their ears were to be nailed to the trone, or another tree, and cut off, after which punishment they were to be banished from the country, with the penalty of hanging if they dared to return.¹ Such zealous legislation was too strict to be put in practice, and sorning went on in defiance of acts of parliament. The thiggers were merely common beggars, who seem to have been a very numerous class, and for whose reformation and suppression numerous decrees were passed, but apparently to as little purpose. Among these was the enactment that no one between the age of fourteen and seventy, either in burgh or to landward, should be allowed to beg, unless it was seen by the ascertainment of the commons of that district that he could not obtain his living otherwise. He was then to have a certain token or badge from the magistrates allowing him to solicit alms, while those who begged without this badge were to be burned on the cheek and banished.²

Of the nature of domestic rural life in Scotland, in reference to the means and mode of subsistence, little can be added to the foregoing accounts of its agricultural condition and the drawbacks that attended it. As pasturage was still more regarded than tillage, the food of the peasantry must have chiefly consisted of milk, animal food, and fish, while bread or vegetables could have formed but a small proportion of the general diet. The bread chiefly in use must have been made of oats or barley, and this, too, in scanty measure, while wheaten bread must have been a luxury reserved only for the rich. The short and uncertain leases which crippled the progress of agriculture must have also retarded the progress of cottage architecture, and men who were liable to a brief notice to quit had little temptation to construct large and permanent homes. The miserable hovels, therefore, built of loose stone, roofed with turf, and having a cow's skin for the door, which struck the eye of Æneas Sylvius at his

¹ *Acts of the Scottish Parliaments*, ii. p. 36.

² *Ibid.* pp. 49, 50.

entrance into Scotland, must have been common throughout the country even at the end of this period. But scanty and uncomfortable as must have been the resources of sustentation among the Scottish peasantry, it is evident that their condition would have been still worse but for the interference of the three Jameses in their behalf. These sovereigns were essentially kings of the people and the champions and benefactors of the poor, and this they showed not only by their constant struggles against the usurpations and oppressions of the aristocracy but by their beneficent laws for the commons at large. By their interference the property of the rustic population was not only more effectually guarded but more securely transmitted to their families. The cultivation of the soil was encouraged by laws which made the leases of their little farms less liable to violation, whatever masters in that changeful period might succeed to the estates; and by confirming the occupation of the cultivators of church lands, irrespective of the vacancy and transference of benefices. The fairs also, their great places of traffic at which they sold their produce, had their oppressive imposts abated, so that the small farmer could carry thither the fruits of his toil without being compelled to part with half of it by the way. Even if the cousin of a lord or laird only ten times removed should come down upon his oat-stack or byre, he was entitled to resist him at outrance if he had the means of doing so, because the law was on his side. It was the misfortune and not the fault of these kings, that, coerced as they were by a too powerful aristocracy and thwarted in their exertions for the general welfare, their concessions were so limited and their enactments so often disregarded.

The commerce of Scotland still continued to advance, although with a languid pace as compared with the progress of other nations. But the causes of this can be easily seen in the natural unproductiveness of the country; the defectiveness, in consequence of continual wars, in the arts and manufactures, upon which commerce so greatly depends; and the laws by which commercial enterprise was shackled and its range restricted. Another and an important cause was the exorbitant ransom imposed first upon David II. and afterwards on James I., for the payment of which the nation at large was heavily assessed during a long course of years. In this way the English may be said to have requited Scotland for the famine of their northern campaigns by imposing on it a heavy load of debt, and to have attempted a conquest of the country anew by deepening its poverty into absolute destitution and starvation. At his accession James I., among the many useful

reforms he contemplated, had taken into account the commercial condition of the kingdom; but his laws for its improvement were characteristic of the narrowness of the age, which, instead of making commerce a reciprocal benefit both to buyer and seller, sought to limit the profits to the latter party only. In this way gold and silver, instead of being allowed to go forth and *fructify* as it best could, was not to be exported from the kingdom without paying a prohibitory duty of 3s. 4d. per pound. Foreign merchants coming into Scotland were obliged to spend the money obtained from the sale of their imports upon articles of Scottish merchandise; and to make sure of their *bona fide* compliance they were placed under the inspection of their hosts and the control of two supervisors of the port until the time of their departure. Even the most common native produce could not be exported without paying duties, of which the following, as appointed by the parliament, are a specimen:—

	s.	d.
Horses, oxen, and sheep, per pound of their value,	1	0
Herrings, per thousand,	0	1
Herrings, barrelled, taken by natives, per last,	4	0
Herrings taken by foreigners,	6	0
Red herrings cured in Scotland, per thousand,	0	4
Skins of martins, each,	2	0
Do. weasels,	0	1
Do. rabbits, per hundred,	1	0
Do. otters and foxes, per ton,	0	6
Do. harts and hinds, do.,	1	0
Do. does and roes, do.,	0	4

Other laws equally stringent upon the taxation of imports and exports were also decreed. In this way the exportation of tallow was utterly prohibited. English goods imported were charged with a duty of 2s. 6d. per pound. Salmon exported from Scotland by strangers paid a duty of 2s. 6d. per pound. A duty of 2s. per pound was levied upon woollen cloth exported from Scotland. No person also was allowed to go abroad as a merchant unless he had three serplaiths of wool or other property of equal value, either belonging to himself or consigned to his charge. That a navigation law had hitherto prevailed in Scotland, although no account of it is extant, appears from an act of parliament passed in 1427. Either the Scottish foreign traffic had so greatly increased or the shipping so diminished that sufficient vessels for the exports could not be obtained. In this case the merchants were allowed to freight the vessels of other countries “as they best may, for a year, notwithstanding the statute made thereupon in the contrary.”¹

¹ *Acts of the Scottish Parliaments*, ii. p. 16.

This deficiency may have suggested a provident enactment passed two years afterwards. By this all lords, barons, and landholders on the western and northern coasts, and six miles inland, except those who held their land by the tenure of furnishing galleys, were to contribute for the building and equipment of galleys at the rate of one oar for every four marks' worth of land, under penalty of a fine of half a mark for every oar.¹

During the reign of James I. the Lombards traded with Scotland; and Bower mentions the wreck of one of their large carracks which occurred at Granton, near Leith, from a sudden storm with a spring-tide on the change of the moon. With the Flemings there was a considerable traffic, which suffered a temporary interruption during this reign; but the breach was soon healed, and the Scottish merchants in Flanders were reinstated with more ample privileges than before. The Scottish trade was also renewed in the northern seas by a treaty of James I. with Eric, King of Denmark, Norway, and Sweden. A new impulse, indeed, appears to have been given to the national merchandise by this energetic sovereign, as appears from the mercantile laws and treaties which formed so essential a portion of his reign. The chief commodities in which the Scots dealt at this period are specified in a very old English poem called the "Libell of English Policie," in which the author gives a sketch of the commerce of Europe as it then existed. From this we learn that the principal exports from Scotland were fells [skins], hides, and wool. This wool was manufactured into cloth at Popering and Baileul, towns on the Flemish coast between Dunkirk and Calais; and to make fine cloth it was necessary to mix it with the wool of England. From Flanders the Scots imported in return a little mercery, large store of haberdashery, and even cart-wheels and wheel-barrows.² One important article in the Scottish traffic which the

"Libell of English Policy" has omitted was pickled salmon; and the frequent parliamentary enactments about the proper season to commence salmon fishing, and the manner in which its produce was to be packed for export, show how profitable a source of national profit it had already become. It has been thought, indeed, that William Elphinston, commemorated as the founder of the commerce of Glasgow in the reign of James I. and one of the wealthiest as well as most enterprising merchants of the period, was a wholesale exporter of pickled salmon. It is enough to add that this true benefactor of his country was father of the patriotic Elphinston, Bishop of Aberdeen, who founded the university of his see.

In tracing the further progress of Scottish commerce the little knowledge we possess is chiefly derived from the parliamentary enactments, and not, as in the case of England, from its effects exhibited upon the national wealth and prosperity. But could Scottish commerce as yet be said to have a history worth recording? The prohibitions that were still laid upon it arose from the mutual jealousy existing between Scotland and England, and even when an interval of truce was established between these implacable opponents the concessions made in favour of each other's mercantile navies were of stinted measure and in slow instalments. Thus in a five years' truce beginning with May, 1431, it was agreed that merchants, pilgrims, and fishers of either kingdom were not to be seized in the ports of the other if driven in by stress of weather, and shipwrecked men were to be allowed to return to their own home. (What a previous state of things does this provision indicate!) In cases of piracy not only the principals but also the receivers and encouragers were made liable either to give compensation or to suffer punishment according to circumstances. But as if to leave some scope for such practices it was also mutually agreed that if the subjects of either king should make aggressions upon the other there should be no breach of the

¹ *Acts*, ii. p. 19.

² We quote the lines of this old author, which are more remarkable for their sound sense and historical value than their poetical worth. He thus speaks of the traffic of Scotland:—

"Also over all Scotland the comoditees
Are felles, hides, and of wolle the flees.
All this must passe by us away,
Into Flaundres by England, this is no nay.
And all her wolle is draped for to selle
In the townes of Poperyng, and of Belle;
Whiche the Duke of Gloucester, in grate ire,
For her falshede sette upon a fire.
And yit thai of Belle and Poperyng
Coude never drape her wolle, for any thyng.
But yef thei had English wolle with alle;
Our goodly wolle it is so generalle,
Nedfull to hem of Spayn, and Scotland als,
And other costes: this is not fals;

Ye worthi marchauntis, I do upon yow,
That this is trew ye wote wele how,
For the staple of that marchaundie
Of Scotland is Flaunders truly.
Than the Scottes ben charged at sye,
Out of Flaundres with litell mercerye,
And grete plente of haberdashe ware,
And with cart wheles bare,
And barowes are laden in substaunce;
Thus must rude ware ben her chevesance.
So may thei not forbere this Flemysh lond,
Therefore yef we wold manly take on hond
To kepe the see fro Flaundres, and fro Spayn,
And fro Scotland, and fro Litell Bretaigne,
We shold right sone have pease, for all her bostes,
For thei must nedes passe by our Englishe costes."

truce in consequence.¹ After the accession of James II. this truce was renewed till 1447, and it was now agreed that along with the former stipulations the following should be added:— If any vessel belonging to England or Scotland should be carried by an enemy into a port of either kingdom, no sale of the vessel or cargo should take place without the consent of the original owners. No vessel driven into any port should be liable to arrest for any debt of the king or any other person, but all creditors should have safe-conducts to sue for and recover their debts, with lawful damages and interest. In cases of shipwreck the property was to be preserved and delivered to the owners; and goods landed for the purpose of repairing a ship might be reloaded in the same or any other vessel without paying customs, except for such as might be sold. Even here, however, a prohibition was inserted in the articles of wool and wool-fells, which were in no case to be carried from the one kingdom to the other either by land or water. In cases of depredation not only the principals but also the receivers and encouragers were made responsible, as before; but as if these restrictions had already been found inefficient it was also further agreed that even the communities of the towns in which the plundered goods were received were to be made liable for compensation, which the sufferers might demand either from the guardians of the truce or the wardens of the marches. To all this was added the usual clause, that the acts of individuals to the contrary should produce no infraction of the truce.² In 1451 it was agreed, in addition to these mutual concessions, that the ships of either nation, on showing their bills of lading and other vouchers, should not be compelled to lower or take in sail or be otherwise impeded in their course by ships of the other.

Commensurate with this progress (although it was slow) in the mercantile reciprocity of the two hostile nations, the trade of Scotland with foreign countries continued to enlarge in extent, and be more systematic in its operations; and with additional wealth, a higher degree of civilization and greater abundance of the comforts of life may be traced throughout the reign of James III. From incidental notices it appears, that besides the burghs, the king himself, the chief nobles, and even the bishops had vessels of their own, by which a profitable trade was carried on with foreign ports. In this way the great landholders of Scotland could dispose of the redundant produce of their fisheries and

hunting grounds, their flocks and herds, for articles which they more immediately needed, and which their own people had not skill enough to manufacture. A greater stir was also manifested during this reign in the construction of vessels and the progress of ship-building. It is evident, however, that warlike adventure and the profits of privateering had a larger share in this improvement than the peaceful spirit of traffic; and that such men as Wood and the Bartons found more enjoyment in the capture of a cargo at sea than its dull purchase at a port. The closing part of this reign was distinguished, however, by parliamentary enactments which had for their chief object the improvement of the national commerce by introducing into it a higher degree of justice and mutual courtesy. Thus, in 1487, when salmon still formed a very important article of export, it was decreed that each barrel should be capable of containing fourteen gallons; and each burgh dealing in this article was to have three iron hoops to measure the full capacity of the cask, after which it was to be branded with a hot iron to attest that it was of standard measure. Cattle were not allowed to be sold into England except for ready money; but it was much that they were allowed to be sold at all. On the same year the following regulations were issued in behalf of foreign merchants, and to encourage them to bring grain and other merchandise to Scotland: "It is ordained that in future all strangers be treated honourably, with all favour, at whatever port they arrive. That none of our sovereign lord's officers, nor other subjects, disturb them, or arrest their persons, ships, or goods; but that they shall have full liberty and freedom to dispose of their goods and sell them to *freemen* without compulsion or violence; nor shall any price be set upon their goods, except in fair bargain and sale. That no new customs, impositions, nor exactions be levied on them, but solely the ancient duties. And when any articles are wanted for the king, that his comptroller or receiver, after the price has been settled, shall have as much of the first and best as is necessary, for which immediate payment shall be made, that the strangers may not suffer by the delay. That in future no person, under pretence of purchasing for the king, shall take goods from strangers to sell again, under the penalty of exile and escheat of movables. And any strangers now in the realm complaining of any goods taken from them or any injury, shall have immediate payment and compensation according to justice: and in like manner any now absent, who may arrive with complaints, shall receive compensation and justice against any person in the kingdom; so that, by the administration of

¹ Rymer, *Fœd.* x. p. 482.

² Rymer, *Fœd.* vol. v. p. 688; Macpherson's *Annals of Commerce*, vol. i. p. 654.

justice and favourable treatment of all strangers, they may be excited to return to the great utility of the whole kingdom."

In turning our attention to town life as it was now exhibited in Scotland, and to civic legislation and its effects upon the industrious burghs which were now slowly struggling into their proper place, we have fortunately a full specimen afforded in the *Extracts from the Council Register of the Burgh of Aberdeen*, published by the Spalding Club in 1844. In these extracts we seem to be reading a file of old newspapers, giving a picture of civic every-day life during the fifteenth century; and in the stirring affairs of this active and thriving burgh we obtain a specimen of the kind of life that was prevalent among the other similar communities throughout the kingdom. From these copious details, however, we shall content ourselves with grouping a few particulars that have more immediate reference to the condition and progress of society during the present period.

The first object that strikes us is the town council, under whose worshipful control the laws of the burgh were administered. Highest in office was the alderman, afterwards known by the title of provost; and after him were the bailies, his assistants, and the councillors, as is still the case in our town corporations. As the office of chief magistrate was obtained by popular election the choice of this honoured representative of the city's rights and privileges seems to have been attended with sufficient bustle and intrigue, as well as followed at times by the usual discontent and disappointment. Of this we have a specimen in the extracts of 1487. In that year Sir John Rutherford of Tarland having been elected alderman, his rival, David Menzies, lodges a complaint that Rutherford is unfit for the office, being a masterful oppressor of the lieges, so that no merchant could dwell in safety within the burgh; and that the election is informal, having been obtained, not by common consent, but through the votes of a clique consisting of a few "simple persons," his kinsmen. Upon this he obtains a royal letter of inquiry to the burgh, and a public meeting of the magistrates and burgesses is called to hear it read. The result, however, was such as to inflict a double disappointment upon the unsuccessful candidate; for the charges were with one voice declared to be unjust, and Sir John proclaimed the magistrate of their free and cordial choice.

As a mercantile community of those feudal periods, not only in Scotland but throughout Europe, was exposed to the violent aggressions or unjust imposts of the hungry barons by whom it was surrounded, the burgh of Aberdeen wisely

availed itself of those bonds of man-rent which had now become common in the country to establish one of these bonds with their powerful neighbour, the Earl of Huntly. In this mutual compact, while the earl engaged to keep the citizens in their freedom and infestments, the magistracy and community of Aberdeen on their part bound themselves to be leal and true to him, to counsel him, and keep his counsel if required; and when it should please him to come to their burgh with few persons or many, to remain or pass as he pleased, that they should maintain and keep him and his company, and take such part with him in his defence as they would do for that of their own persons—saving their allegiance to their sovereign lord the king and the freedom of their burgh. Thus, whosoever assailed the good town of Aberdeen, or molested any of its citizens, might look for a sharp reprisal from the Earl of Huntly, while the earl, if at any time assailed by his unfriends, might calculate upon the aid of the townsmen. The exception, however, in which their allegiance to the king and the freedom of the burgh are specified by the burghers in the bond of man-rent, were not empty words, as the following letter will show. The earl and others his associates, having made a demand upon the town for military service which appears to have fallen within the bounds of the restriction, was answered by the alderman in the following courteous but decisive terms: "High and mighty lords: I recommend me humbly unto your Lordships with all humility and service. Please your Lordships to wit that I have received certain credence of yours by your squire, Alexander of Lesly, charging me and the town to be at you this Monday at evening at the Cabrach. My lords, I have called the neighbours of the town and shown them your credence; the which neighbours are well set at all their godly powers to please your lordships with their service in as far as they may, beseeching your lordships ye will not be displeased that they may not come to this hasty tryst after this credence; for in good faith we have no horse, nor may get none to come, because of the warning of the country of gentlemen, to come to your lordships at this tryst. And further, my Lords, we are charged by our sovereign lord to keep our town, for he is sickerly informed of a fleet of Englishmen to come for the destruction of our town and of others within this realm; for the which we beseech you to have us excused, as our great trust is in your singular Lordships, the which Almighty God conserve at your high and mighty noble hearts' desires. Written, under my signet, at Aberdeen, this last Monday the 18th day of July" (1463).

While the magistrates of Aberdeen made war-

like leagues with a powerful noble, whose feuds they were willing to support in requital for his countenance and protection, they were careful to look to the defences of the town and their means for repelling an enemy either domestic or foreign. All the community, bond and free, were sworn to rise with the alderman and bailies for the safeguard of the town and neighbourhood as soon as summoned, and whosoever refused or absented himself was to forfeit his civic rights and be expelled. That all might be ready for such a summons, however desperate or sudden, the requirement was often repeated by the magistrates, that every one should have at hand in his booth [shop] the usual weapons of his rank—sallet, habergeon, and target, sword, axe, bow, and spear, and be prompt to sally out in full array at the ringing of the alarm-bell. By this provision all the requirements of war could be fulfilled from a regular siege or battle to the quelling of a street affray or the capture of a runaway burglar. But that a warlike and also a quarrelsome spirit should be nursed by such a mode of life was unavoidable even among ease-loving, money-making traffickers; and in a civil case we find one man in court throwing down his hat as a challenge to his adversary to end the question by single combat. Another whose name is attached to a contract, and whose profession is that of a tanner, subscribes himself "John Out-with-the-sword"—leaving cause to suspect that he slashed skins as well as curried them. This warlike spirit of the burgesses of Aberdeen was common throughout the Scottish towns wherever men had a shop or stall to protect, or goods to be coveted; and we can easily understand the stout resistance given to the Earl of Douglas at the fair of Lochmaben by the assembled pedlars and shopkeepers. That the armoury of every citizen should be in good condition, especially when an invasion from England was to be feared, as in 1448, the town council elected a committee of four, who were sworn "by the great oath" to examine and decide upon the fitness of the weapons possessed by each citizen "without fraud or guile." The other military precautions of the Aberdonian magistracy indicated the dangers among which they habitually lived, and the continual safeguards which such a kind of life demanded. The gates and other accesses to the town were kept shut every night. In a season of danger the town was to be watched every night by a guard of thirty citizens. Any person appointed to the duty of watching, and failing to attend at the hour, was to forfeit eight shillings; and any watchman that slept on his post, or left it before sunrise, was to be fined in sixpence. Every night guardian was to be well harnessed

and weaponed; and no person from the country, or other than an inhabitant of the town, was to be appointed to the duty of watching. It was moreover enacted that no townsman was to harbour any persons coming from without the town, unless he gave the alderman information what persons they were, and how many, under penalty of banishment from the burgh; and while they remained with him he was to be responsible for their conduct, and for any mischief they might occasion. All who had back-doors were to keep them carefully shut, that no enemy might enter through them into the town, under a penalty of eight shillings; and their front doors were to be carefully watched and made secure under the same liability. In this way not a loophole was to be left for the entrance of Highland catheran or English invader. No faint-heartedness was to be tolerated among the defenders; and it was proclaimed that whosoever at the approach of danger should remove his goods out of the town, or leave it himself, should forfeit his tack and have his house taken down. But in spite of all these precautions of watch and ward, and assurance of stout hearts and good weapons, Aberdeen, like most of the Scottish towns, was greatly wanting in the defence of stone walls and ramparts; and the paltry dykes with which they had hitherto been satisfied were no security against those "carts of war" which the English could bring against them. Of this the civic authorities were convinced in 1452, and they decreed, that on account of the dangers at hand the town should be fortified "with walls and strengths in all goodly haste." This work, moreover, was to be done under the direction of a committee of "certain well-set persons," who were to go about with the alderman and determine the proper sites to be selected, and the manner in which they were to be fortified. But the Scots, as we have seen, had little skill as military engineers; and ever since their successful war of independence against England they seem to have regarded the protection of stone and lime with something like heroic contempt. In spite, therefore, of this urgent decree the work, after thirty years had elapsed, was still to be done, and in 1481 the decree was repeated, but with as little efficacy as before.

But a more difficult operation than that of fortifying a Scottish town of the period was the act of cleansing and purifying it; and thus the visitations of pestilence were generally as frequent as an English invasion, and in some cases more terrible and destructive. In this, indeed, the magistrates were not to blame, for their enactments on the subject were both sharp and frequent; but let them enact as they might the

evil went on unchecked, and their proclamations have only revealed the filthy condition of their houses and streets, and the unsavoury habits of their population, for the wonderment of posterity. But where people were huddled together for mutual protection each town became an encampment under siege; streets narrow and crooked could be all the more easily defended; and a lane closed at the extremity would either keep an enemy from entering or shut him up in a *cul-de-sac* when he tried to retreat. Toward the close of the present period this crowding had risen to such a height that water, fresh air, and free respiration had become important and frequent articles of civic legislation; and under the year 1477 we find the alderman and several councillors commissioned to pass through the town, to inspect the vennels that were closed, and cause them to be set in order and opened up, as they should find expedient. Frequent mention is also made in the council records of regulations for the amendment of the causeways and gutters, and keeping the approaches to the town-gates clean, the expense to be defrayed by the tax of a penny upon each hearth. As we have already noticed, a travelling committee, or, as it was more properly called, an assize, was appointed to explore the town for the purpose of its purification: one necessary part of their commission was to ascertain the condition of the houses; and any dwelling which they proscribed, if not reformed within eight days, was to have its doors and windows taken down, and thus be made uninhabitable. But all this was comparatively little, compared with the notices to be found in the town's "Buk of Statutis," describing the existing state of things soon after the close of the present period. Dung-hills were not only as plentiful, but as openly displayed as houses, while the swine appear to have been almost as numerous and free of the streets and common thoroughfares as the citizens themselves. It was enacted that during the summer these unclean beasts should be inclosed within the burgh from sowing to reaping time, that they might not wander among the fields and eat up the growing corn. It was enacted that, within the town, their styes that were planted beside the Fore-gate, and under the outside stairs of houses, and in other open places, should be destroyed; and that they should not be lodged in houses where fires were kept burning during the night, as they were sometimes found to be dangerous incendiaries. It was finally enacted that all the swine in the town should be removed beyond it, or else "kept fast in houses;" and whatever stray porker was found at large forty-eight hours after the proclamation was to be seized as a

waif, and dealt with accordingly. The magisterial war against the dunghills was equally strenuous: those abominations which appear to have dotted the main street across the whole length of the town were ordered to be removed and put away within eight days; and wherever this charge was neglected the filthy heap was to be shot back into the doors and gates of the house to which it belonged, while the householder himself was to be amerced in a fine of eight shillings for his negligence. And yet the Scottish towns continued dirty, and people sickened and died before their day! Amidst all this defilement and miasma, by which every disease was invigorated and infection conveyed like wildfire, it is strange that among the various professions of such a populous town as Aberdeen we find no mention of a physician, unless the solitary notice of a "pottikar" is to be taken for such; and the first indication in the town records of a regular doctor does not occur till 1503, when one was engaged by the council, on a yearly pension of ten marks, "to cum and vesy tham that beis seik, and schow them his medecin, on thar expensis."

To feed such a congregated multitude, in a country where the means of subsistence were so limited, was a problem that often occupied the cares of these primitive town councils; and of this there is abundant evidence in the statutes of Aberdeen. The magistrates regulated the assize of flesh, fish, bread, and ale, and all other provisions that were brought into the market, and took care that the articles should be sold at the proper time, place, and price. The following enactments to prevent forestallment of sale, or the buying of provisions to sell at an undue profit, will give some idea of their provident care and even-handed justice. No person was to go out of the town-gates to make purchases, but to wait until the market was opened. No fisher of salmon was to sell his fish until it was brought to the place of public sale. No huckster was to buy provisions for the purpose of retailing them till eleven o'clock, when the hour of public sale was over. And that the lawgivers themselves might be on the alert to execute their own enactments, it was decreed that the bailies who were found negligent in enforcing these rules should for their neglect suffer imprisonment and be fined each in ten pounds. To ascertain the qualities of provisions, also, and fix their price, certain officials were annually chosen, under the names of *gustatores vini*, *gustatores cervisie*, *appreciatores carniū*, &c. Among the statute market prices of this period we find a pound of butter for threepence, a pound of cheese for a penny, and eggs not less than ten in number for a penny;

and of the strictness with which the standard was enforced we have a casual instance in the mention of a huckster who was fined for selling an apple for a penny, when three should have been given for the same price. As might be expected, the regulations were most frequent which concerned the absolute necessities of life; and thus the butchers and bakers, under their not yet obsolete names of fleshers and baxters, occupy the front rank in this important branch of legislation. The laws appointed for the fleshers were established upon natural sanitary principles, and only on three days in the week—Monday, Wednesday, and Saturday—they were allowed to kill animals; this also, as well as the cutting-up of carcasses, was only to be done in their slaughter-houses; and these places were to be cleansed every Friday, and the hutches to be removed. They were also to sell no meat until the price was fixed by the sworn appraisers, under heavy penalties rising with every offence; and none were to “blow flesh,” under the penalty of forfeiting it. In like manner every baxter was to adhere to the price fixed by the magistrates, under penalty for the first default of eight shillings, for the second sixteen shillings, and for the third the forfeiture of the bread and his own exposure in the pillory and expulsion from his craft. Every baxter was to stamp his bread with his own token, that it might be known whose it was. It will be seen also that the bills of the nineteenth century against Sunday trading are no modern inventions, but things of old standing, in Scotland at least, from the fact that by the civic laws of Aberdeen no merchant of the burgh was to open his booth door either to buy or sell or do any business upon a Sunday, under the forfeiture of a pound of wax, to be applied to the kirk-work.¹

As such a stirring and high-spirited community, where every trader was a soldier and every booth a ready armoury of weapons, must have been hard to coerce and rule, the mention of punishments in these Aberdeen extracts is of frequent occurrence. But these in most cases appear to have been wisely addressed not so much to the persons as the pride and purses of the offenders, who on such points were peculiarly sensitive. Let the following few instances be accepted as specimens. John Cadiou and his brother take possession of the fishing-net of Adam of Hills, and for this forceful or fraudu-

lent deed are condemned to go down upon their knees before the open council, beg pardon of the alderman as representative of the commons, and pay a fine of forty shillings for kirk-work. William Mathieson commits a breach of the peace on the person of John Galt, and is sentenced to “uphold the lady-mass with voice” (pay the choristers) on Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday each week for a year. It is also further decreed that if either of these worthies renews the quarrel against the other he shall be amerced in ten pounds for kirk-work. David Patrickson, burgess, for the unseemly and heinous offence of “rebellion done by him to the alderman,” is sent to prison. But this is merely a prelude to his punishment, for on the following Sunday he is to come to St. Nicholas’ Church with his gown loose, a candle of a pound weight of wax in his hand, and to offer that candle upon the altar and ask pardon of the alderman and council, promising never to repeat his offence; after which he is to give every week a pint of wine to the kirk for the whole year. Thomas Quelp, having wounded William Volkat with a knife, is condemned to kneel before the injured William, present to him the knife, that he may “do with it what he will,” and humbly to crave forgiveness of his offence, with due promises of reformation. He is also on demand to pay forty shillings to the chaplains of the “holy blood mass,” and because the offence was done against a brother of the gild he is to pay for a pipe of wine at what time it shall be demanded of him by the alderman and council. This curious mixture of church-money and wine by which these penalties are characterized, wherein the interests of religion and the jollities of a city feast seem to be regarded with an equal eye, cannot fail to have struck the reader; but from these records it appears that the parish church was undergoing an extensive reparation, and that every aid, whether from voluntary contribution or compulsory assessment, was needed for the work. As it is well known to civic magistrates as well as national legislators that prevention is better than punishment, an instance of this conviction was afforded by the town council in 1484. John Ross, baxter, was at feud with two men, and had probably shown every wish to follow up the quarrel, upon which he was prohibited from wearing a sword at night, or other fencible weapons, on penalty of imprisonment. We suspect that this disarming act must have been inflicted on others of the citizens besides the belligerent baker. From a few incidental notices it appears that the penalties upon female trespassers were equally heavy and humiliating. Even at such an early age the resources of pawning seem to have been not

¹ “7th November, 1449. In the firste, that na merchand man of this burgh opin his both door to do ony merchandise, outhir sell or by, apou the Sondai, under the payne of a punde of wax, or the value of it, to be rasit by the dene of the gild, of ilk faute unforgiffin, and to be appliit to the kirkwerk.”—Extracts from the Council Register of the Burgh of Aberdeen, *Spalding Club Publications*, p. 402.

only well known, but turned to their worst account, as is evident from a proclamation of the magistrates against an individual offender. This was the wife of a certain Wat Cutler, who was known to be a "strawer of her husband's goods." It was proclaimed, therefore, that no person within or without the burgh was to take in pledge any articles that she might bring to them "for pennyworths," but "dry silver" instead; and whoever received any such pledges from her was to return them to Wat her husband without exacting the redemption-money.

Among the notices of the good town of Aberdeen at this period we perceive an instance of its scientific advancement of which few perhaps of the provincial towns of England could boast. It had a town-clock so early as the middle of the fifteenth century, although these had but newly come into fashion in some of the chief cities of Europe. This public time-keeper of Aberdeen is sometimes called the "orloge," because it measured the hours, and the "knok," because it struck them; and its site was the tolbooth, the chief public building and place of resort, where it was conspicuous to all. But as clocks were still of clumsy mechanism, being moved by weights and having no pendulum, the choice of the keeper of the town horologe in Aberdeen was a subject of great moment. In 1453 we find the alderman and council assembled for the purpose, when their choice fell upon John Crookshank, who was appointed to the office with a salary of forty shillings annually. Considerably later than this (A.D. 1493) we find them conferring it on David Theman, goldsmith (probably a foreigner), who for "the bigin, reformacioun, and uphaldin of thar commone knok" was to receive not only forty shillings a year, but several privileges and perquisites. Another important town functionary, in the absence of printed advertisements and placards, was a bellman, whose office it was to announce every public proclamation, and who should therefore be a person "most habil and profitable for the town." So lucrative also it must have been that, instead of having a salary attached to it, the office was exposed to sale, while the whole community, magistrates and all, were assembled at the tolbooth to witness the competition of the candidates. In 1471 we find it adjudged to Andrew Murray, mason, who being the highest bidder receives the bell and is appointed for life, with the consent of bailies, council, and the whole community.

Of the festivities and sports of the period that were exclusively civic the notices are still very scanty. Gay processions, and partly of a religious character, appear, however, to have enlivened the monotony of a town life, among

which particular mention is made of Candlemas-day, when the trades marched in procession and paid their wonted offerings. On this occasion the principal characters of the pageant were to be furnished by the different professions in the following style:—The dyers were to find the emperor and two doctors; the smiths and hammermen, the three kings of Cologne; the tailors, Saint Bridget, Saint Helena, and Saint Joseph; the skimmers, two bishops and four angels; the weavers and waukers, Simeon and his disciples; the cordwainers, the messenger and Moses; the fleshers, two or four "wodmen" (wild men). The brethren of the guild were to find the knights in harness, and the baxters were to provide the minstrels. But to each of these contingents of the different trades there was also to be appended "as many honest squires as they may." The procession of so many personages both real and allegorical, in which the uttermost taste and splendour which they could command must have been bestowed, and where every trade endeavoured to outshine the others, and the delight of the gazing and shouting multitude, whom philosophy had not yet soured to such spectacles, may be easily imagined. Such was an Aberdeen Candlemas of 1442. The importance attached to such an array may also be guessed from a decree in 1484, that all the craftsmen should in time to come appear on the occasion in their best attire, and with the tokens of their craft on their breasts; and that whoever should fail in doing so should lose the freedom of his craft for a year.

Another festival that seems to have created some stir in Aberdeen as well as every burgh in Scotland was that of the Abbot of Unreason—a functionary whose office and character requires some explanation. During the middle ages, when religious ignorance was at its height, the most sacred subjects were often converted into broad farce in the miracle and mystery plays and travestied into mumming exhibitions to excite the merriment of the crowd; while the church, reposing in the confidence of its strength, had so little fear of these parodies that churchmen themselves were often to be found among their principal contrivers and actors. These, under various names and forms, were common through every country in Europe; and in England they formed part of the Christmas and other sacred festivities, under the titles of the Festival of Fools, the Abbot of Unreason, and the Boy-bishop, during which season of license a masquerading mob took possession of the churches and made themselves merry by caricaturing those church services which at every other period were regarded with awe and terror. It was natural, amidst this intermittent

fever, that the infection should creep into Scotland; but there the practice seems to have been followed upon a more limited scale. The chief of these profane dignitaries was the Abbot of Unreason, termed in Scotland the Abbot out of Reason and in Aberdeen the Abbot of Bonaccord. We find no notice of him among the town records until A.D. 1440, when this mock functionary was duly recognized, and Richard Kintore, Abbot of Bonaccord, received from the town council a grant of the admission dues of a burgess to defray his expenses in the play of the "Haly Blude," which was performed at the Windmill Hill. The title of this play is sufficient to indicate the profanity of its character. The mirth of these practices also was so riotous that in 1445 it was "ordained by the council and many others of the gild for letting [hindering] and staunching of diverse enormities done in time bygane by the abbots of this burgh called of Bonaccord, that in time to come they will give no fees to no such abbots. It is seen speedful to them (an item adds) that for the instant year they will have no such abbot, but they will that the alderman for the time, and a baillie whom he will take to him, shall supply that fault [defect]." It was time that such practices should be checked; for independently of their misrule their wasteful extravagance and expenditure was becoming too much for a thrifty industrious town, as the following extract from the records of 1552 will testify:—"The lords of Bonaccord in times bygone have made too many great, sumptuous, and superfluous banquetings during the time of their reign, and specially in May, which was thought nothing profitable nor godly, and did hurt to sundry young men that were elected in the said office, because the last elected did aye pretend to surmount their predecessors in their riotous and sumptuous banquetings, and the cause, principle, and good institution thereof, which was in holding of the good town in gladness and blitheness, with dances, farces, plays, and games in times convenient, neglected and abused." As we have already seen, the worshipful alderman and a grave bailie were selected for the nonce to supply the fooleries of the season and fill the places of the abbot and his confrere, the prior of Bonaccord; but whether they had attempted to "play out the play," and had done it clumsily, or given the banquet with the play omitted, does not appear; however, after an interval the deposed officials were reinstated in all their former glory. This fact we can recognize in an entry under the year 1496, where the abbot and prior for the time being were elected and endowed with their usual fee, "for the honour, consolation, and pleasure of

this burgh, like as has been used in times of their worthy and honourable progenitors."

Another strange religious festival which had found its way into Scotland was that of the Boy-bishop, or *episcopus puerorum*. This part of the mimicry of holy things appears to have originated in the convents upon the Continent for the amusement of the younger monks, and from these to have passed to the public schools both in France and England. On this occasion a boy belonging to the choir of a collegiate church or educational establishment was elected bishop by his companions, and adorned with mitre, crozier, and episcopal vestments, sometimes of a richer description than even those worn by a real prelate; they then took possession of a church, where they prayed, chanted, and performed mass; after which the boy-bishop ascended the pulpit and preached with due gesticulation to the crowd who had assembled to witness and laugh at the spectacle, and were ready with their applause in the shape of substantial money gifts. After this parody the juvenile choir paraded the streets, dancing and singing as they went, and collected offerings at each door, which were expended for the maintenance of the poorer of their order or the support of their institution. So well fitted, indeed, was this practice for keeping the people in good humour and collecting money for religious or charitable purposes that the clergy themselves encouraged it, and often supplied rich dresses and ornaments for the masquerade. These notices will suffice to explain its acceptance with such a grave community as the council of Aberdeen, before whom it was probably paraded in its least revolting character. The boy-bishop of their town was elected on St. Nicholas' Day, and his prelacy usually lasted till the evening of St. Innocents' Day. How he preached or paraded during the interval is not told; but on the first-mentioned of these days he and the master of the Grammar-school went upon their professional visits and collected the offerings which every respectable householder was bound to give them as their due, under severe penalties if they refused.¹ It appears, indeed, that this

¹ The following is the enactment of the council:—"The sayd day, the haill counsell, present for the tyme, all in ane voce, ordanit that the maister of thair grammar scuyll sell haf iiij s. Scottis, of the sobirest persoun that resauis him and the bischop at Sanct Nicholace day till his vage, at the leyst, and euere vder honest men to gif him at thair plasour; and gif ony honest man of ony reputatioun, oder craftismen or vder, haldis furth the bischop and giffis hym nocht entres, he sell pay iiij s. to the maister, and viij s. to the baillies for thair wnlaw, and ordanis the officiaris to pound and distrenzie for the samin; and that because it ves considerit be thaim that he hes na vder fee to leif on, lyk as his predecessouris hed afor him, and vder maisteris of vder scuilles." Extracts from the *Council Register*, p. 186.

was the source from which the teacher derived his revenue. It is gratifying to find that in 1554 this degrading estimate of literature was amended by a salary of ten marks annually, which was settled for life upon the master of the Grammar-school of Aberdeen.¹

While we thus find the Scottish burghs assessed for the maintenance of boy-bishops and abbots out of reason, whose only task was to make the people merry, a more rational impost was that which was levied for the support of the town minstrels. These appear to have been of old establishment both in Aberdeen and elsewhere, and by the statutes enacted in their favour we learn the nature of their duties. Their appointment was for life. Their office was to do "continual good service" to the town in their proper calling "at even, and morn, and other times needful;" and for this they were to have "their daily wages and meat of the neighbours of this good town circularly;" while those who refused payment were to be amerced in eight shillings to the bailies, "and two shillings to the said minstrels for their day's cost." This was for the substantial burgesses, who were able to endure such a penalty; but it is added, "If there be any poor folks that are not able to give them meat, that they give them (the minstrels) two pence to their fee and costs." Such an establishment was reckoned not only necessary for the comfort and pleasure but also the grandeur of the burgh; and in the reception of noble visitors and great civic processions of the magistrates the services of these musicians were in great request as well as bountifully rewarded. This appears by an entry of the 24th of July, 1501, to the following effect:—"The said day, the Alderman, baillies, and council assigned to their common minstrels ten pounds to be taken from the dean of gild's, to furnish them to the passage, with the alderman and other honourable neighbours to the feast of our sovereign lord's marriage, at the command of his highness and to the pleasure of his majesty." What was the particular dress of these minstrels is not stated; but we find that when they passed on this occasion to the royal marriage they had a silver badge, with the arms of Aberdeen engraved or embossed upon it, which was given to them by the town, and made by David Thomson, the goldsmith and horologist of Aberdeen.

Another lovable custom of the burghs of Scotland was to give a "propyne" or present to such royal or noble personages as were pleased to honour them with a visit. Of these honorary gifts there is frequent mention in the council

minutes of Aberdeen. The first notice of these is in 1448, when in consequence of the expected arrival of James II. the council decreed to make him a propine of two tuns of Gascony wine, six lights of three stone of wax, and twelve half-pounds of scorchets, or failing thereof, of twelve whole pounds. But the visit was not paid till 1455; and as it was probably a hasty one, for which no such preparation could be made, it was resolved to present him with a hundred marks. After these the notices of propines to successive sovereigns are numerous, and have reference to the sumptuous entertainment of their royal visitors during their stay, such as wax lights of ample size, pipes and "potions" of common wines, or of "stark mighty wines," of dainty spiceries, and even of coals. Nor were the principal nobles who were attendant on the king neglected, and their patronage to the good town was ensured by bountiful allowances, chiefly of wine. Even personages of inferior political consequence, but worthy of affectionate regard, were also welcomed with scarcely less liberality than that which was accorded to the noblest; and among these was Hector Boece, the historian. It was proposed to bestow on him a tun of wine if he could remain till the new wines came from abroad, but if otherwise, to present him with twenty pounds Scots "to help to buy him bonnets, which of them he thinks most expedient at his own pleasure."

Such was the state of a Scottish burgh and the traffickers who traded in it; their estate was mean and their mode of living uncomfortable, according to modern estimate. But among them were men of intelligence, industry, and enterprise, whose labours had been rewarded with plentiful fortunes, and whose influence in society was commensurate with their wealth. The career of one of these men about the close of the present period is distinctly set forth in the first tale of the *Priests of Peebles*, where the important question is propounded, "Why do not the children of burgesses thrive to the third descent?" In this sketch of the poet the mercantile adventurer commences trade "with hap [good luck], and halfpenny, and a lamb's skin," and goes barefooted from town to town in all weathers. His petty earnings expand into a pack, and with its contents he traffics at the fairs until it becomes worth forty pounds. His pack is thus too heavy for his own shoulders, and he purchases a "stalwart horse," to which in process of time a cart is attached to carry his pots and pans, which he transmutes into Flanders coffers, chest, and counter, and he has become a rich man ere people were aware of it. He now settles in town, opens a shop, buys and sells wool; and at last goes abroad with a shipment

¹ Extracts from the *Council Register*, p. 202.

of his goods, returns a wealthy man, and marries a rich wife. He continues to make these profitable voyages, and becomes the proprietor of a ship. Having thus attained to the wealth and dignity of a merchant-royal, he adapts his mode of living to the change; and here we have a glimpse of the style of a great trafficker of the reign of James III., and such a one as Leith, Perth, Dundee, or Aberdeen delighted to honour. He washed his hands in a basin of silver. His cupboard was enriched with plate of gold and silver to the value of three thousand pounds. His gowns and other parts of clothing were gay and rich, those for week-days being green and gray, and those for Sundays of silk. His wife was equally splendid in scarlet, and in her expenditure had no reason to fear a dearth of ale or bread. Such was a Scottish merchant of the day—not equal, certainly, to the Canynys, De la Pooles, and Whytingtons of England, but still a merchant-prince in his own poor country, and an honourable type of its frugality, industry, and success.

To this picture, however, succeeds a contrast in which we have the sketch of a Scottish spendthrift of the day—a class, indeed, that must have been limited enough where so few had large fortunes to spend. It is the son and heir of the aforesaid merchant, now grown to manhood, and who enters into his father's possession but not to his career of industry and thrift. He has abundance, and wherefore should he toil? With his fingers glittering with rings, and so tenderly nurtured that his mother "tholed not the reek on him to blaw," he thinks foul scorn that any one should ever hear that his father had sold a sheep-skin. Forth he struts with two serving-men and a varlet at his back, and would be frantic if any one inquired at him about the price of cloth. He frequents the taverns and plays at hazard until he is reduced by dicing and dissipation to sheer poverty; and being unable to work he repairs to court, and becomes the follower of some nobleman's heir, of whom he is content to be the humble toad-eater or swash-buckler in requital for protection and bread.

Of the style of living maintained among the aristocracy our knowledge is still very defective. A momentary glimpse of court life is afforded us in the account of the last evening spent by James I. It was Christmas, when devotion was wont to be mixed with festivity over Europe as well as in Scotland. The king plays at chess with one of his knights; tables or draughts are also in use among the gay party; and these games are diversified with the reading of romances, singing, piping, harping, and "other honest solaces of great pleasure and dis-

port." In this way they amused themselves both before supper and till a late hour afterwards. The king, amidst this blithe festival, is debonair and kind, treating his lords, knights, and barons not only as guests but friends and companions, and jests with a buxom knight, called the King of Love, in the true style of poetry and romance, while his fingers are moving the pawns upon the chess-board. All the others are in like manner employed in their respective groups, and are so absorbed in their amusements that they take no notice of the conspirators in the back-ground, who are moving as darkly and silently as shadows on the wall, and tremblingly awaiting the issue of their enterprise. When the mirth and enjoyment of the festival have ended the king gives the signal to retire by calling for the *voidee* or parting-cup; and after drinking a courteous adieu to his guests they depart to their homes. The wax torches with which the hall was lighted, the highly-spiced dishes and abundantly sweetened cates, as well as the variety of wines with which the guests were regaled, are unfortunately not mentioned, which would have so greatly aided us in our estimate of royal and noble life in Scotland. And now that the night's festival has ended, and the king is left to his domestic privacy, he gladly disencumbers himself of his regal attire and ornaments, in preparation for rest, and is all unclothed except his night-gown and shirt, while upon the bench beside him lie his night-cap, his comb, his coverchef, his furred pynsons (slippers), and a foot-sheet—a simple toilet and array of night-gear that still smacks of a poor and rude country. The same simplicity is perceptible in the rest of the sketch; for although thus all but unclothed and in his bed-chamber he stands before the chimney amusing himself with the queen and her maids of honour, who are accustomed to bestow their attendance upon the royal pair to the last, and who feel no scruple about a dishabille which can scarcely be even mentioned to their fair descendants. He then casts off his night-gown, and is ready to go to bed.¹ Such was the night of a palace festival, whether its place might chance to be the regal hall of the monastery of Perth, the stately castle of Stirling, or the time-honoured royal residence of Holyrood. Such also, although with inferior state, were probably the great evening gatherings in noble castles when a church holiday was to be observed or a happy event commemorated.

In the succeeding reign we have, from a foreigner who was present, the description of a

¹ Contemporary account of the murder of James I. in Pinkerton's *History of Scotland*, appendix, vol. i. p. 462.

royal banquet on the occasion of the marriage of James II. with Mary of Gueldres in 1449. The hall was thronged by Scottish magnates and the noble attendants of the bride; James was dressed in a violet-coloured cloak lined with white cloth, and wore boots and spurs; Mary, to the astonishment of her countrymen, had been arrayed by her Scottish tiring-women in a robe of violet colour lined with ermine, while her long hair hung down unplaited and uncurled upon her back and shoulders. Three tables extended through the length of the hall, filled with honoured and eager guests. The first dish, which was brought in as a flourish of preparation, was the figure of a boar's head painted and stuck full of coarse pieces of flax, called *hards*, and surrounded with thirty banners bearing the arms of the king and chief nobles; and after this coarse production of art had been sufficiently admired the flax was kindled and the head set ablaze, amidst the shouts and admiration of all present. After this pageant a ship of silver, of great size and richly wrought, was introduced, which was divided into several compartments for holding salt and spices. Then came the work in earnest by the entrance of the first course, preceded by the Earl of Orkney accompanied by four knights; and the other courses which followed in succession were carried in dishes by thirty or forty persons. But still we are tantalized by our ignorance of these various messes, both as to their material and the mode of cookery. At the third table were seated a church dignitary whom the foreigner calls a *patriarch*, and who probably was some foreign ecclesiastic, three bishops, an abbot, and several priests; and he informs us that the five eminent churchmen quaffed their wine, which was as plentiful as sea-water, out of a large *hanap*, or wooden bowl, without spilling a single drop of the good liquor. Five hours did this feast continue, being succeeded neither by supper nor dancing. On the day after there was also abundance of feasting; but the entertainments seemed coarse and barbarous in the eyes of the accomplished narrator. On contrasting these with the style of living at the courts of France and Burgundy Mary might well weep, as she did five or six days afterwards, when her train took their departure, and left her to her queenship and her destiny.

In the reign of James III. we are presented with the picture of a Scottish state banquet in the poem of the "Howlat," but unfortunately the sketch adds little to our scanty knowledge of the subject. Although personages of the highest dignity are present, the occupants of royal thrones, their seats on this occasion were nothing better than boards and benches. In

the midst of the feasting minstrels are introduced, and as the pope and cardinals were the chief guests the song consisted of a hymn to the Virgin. The singing being ended a juggler succeeded;

"With castis, and with cautilis, a quaynt caryar;"

and after he has ably played his part to the amusement of the company a bard from Ireland enters, who sings a wild bombastic song, half Irish and half Scotch, insults the attendants, and fights a desperate battle with two "flyrand [fleering] fools" or professional jesters, by whom he is very roughly handled. In these several notices we can distinctly perceive the mixture of pompous show and harlequinade with which the feasts of the middle ages were enriched, when quips and cranks were as necessary for pleasure or digestion as salt, sauces, and spices. In this way we find in the lordly dining-halls of England and Scotland such a medley of assistants that we wonder how they came there—the very sweepings of a showman's booth or village hustings, according to modern reckoning, but which in those days had the free entrance of lordly halls and the applause of princes. But mirth was a necessary accompaniment to clumsy joints and unskilful cookery; and a five hours' dinner of such fare, among those whose conversational subjects were so limited, made the services of the jester, juggler, and ballad-singer a welcome relief.

A more pleasing description of a feast among the middle classes towards the end of this period is contained in the old poem of the *Priests of Peebles*, and serves to show the advance that had been making in the comfort and civilization of ordinary life. Three ecclesiastics assemble at the town of that name to have a collation upon the day of St. Bryde. Their portraits, which are distinctly sketched, announce one of them as an accomplished Scottish traveller of the period, for he had travelled in Portugal and Spain, having in the latter country visited four Christian kingdoms and one heathen or Moorish. He had also been in Rome, Flanders, Venice, and other countries. Another of this triumvirate does not presume to call himself a traveller, as he had only been at Rome. They adjourn to a tavern, where a good substantial dinner is speedily prepared for them, consisting of three fat capons roasted and well larded, with sundry other meats, while they prefer a boy as their only attendant, that they may converse without interruption. When the capons and other good cheer are ready a *roundel* or round table is set before them covered with a fair clean cloth, and bread put upon it, and after dinner they drink a quart; and

though the kind of liquor is not mentioned we may presume it was nothing inferior to the good substantialities of their meal. All this shows that by the close of this period comfortable living had been carefully studied and was well understood—at least in the taverns of Scotland—and that they could provide the materials as well as the adjuncts of an excellent dinner. As yet Scotland seems to have been ignorant of distillation, as we find no mention of strong waters in any form, the beverages consisting entirely of wine, ale, and beer, the last having apparently not been introduced into Scotland until the reign of James III., when it is for the first time mentioned in a parliamentary statute. The increase in the importations of wine and beer had now become so profitable that even already these liquors had become subject to pestilent adulterations enough to call the attention of the legislature. The following stern decree upon the subject was accordingly fulminated by the parliament in 1482:—"It is statute and ordained that in time to come none of our sovereign lord's lieges bring corrupt or mixed wine within the realm; and if any such happens to be sent them, that no man sell nor tap it from [the time] it be declared by the bailies and gustars of wine that it is mixed or corrupt; but send it again forth of the realm under the pain of death: And that no person within the realm take upon hand in time to come to mix wine or beer under the pain of death, as said is."¹

From a Peebles tavern to a Peebles fair the transition is easy, in consequence of the well-known poem of James I. entitled "Peblis to the Play;" and it may be taken as a sample of the fairs of the country in general during this period. Such regular concourses were of vital importance in every country during the middle ages, as it was on those occasions that the work of buying and selling was chiefly transacted, and industry furnished with its proper mart. We have already seen the pedlar exalted into a wealthy merchant by his diligent attendance upon these meetings both on foot and horseback. It was not always for the mere purposes of traffic, however, that a whole county would pour its population into this bustling marketplace, for it was the richest of raree-shows and the great resort of fun, frolic, and mischief as well as sober calculating trading. Accordingly in this poem of the royal bard we have the gleeful preparation of the rustics for this annual saturnalia, the careful dressing of men and women in their best attire on the occasion, their journey to the town of Peebles, and the jibes

and merriment with which they shorten the way. It is the season of Beltane (1st of May), the gayest of Scottish festivals, and the tavern of Peebles is filled with those whose only purpose is to eat, drink, and laugh. They order the tables to be drawn out and white napery to be laid upon them, and whatever is brought in by the landlady to the hungry and thirsty guests is scored up upon the wall. The hour of reckoning comes, and one of the company collects the *lauche* (or lawin) upon a trencher. This process, however, produces a quarrel, in which hard words are followed by blows, upon which the whole party rush out into the street and commence an affray that deepens into a general *melee*, while the speeches, blows, and disasters of the several combatants are given with great comic humour. Luckily, however, no deaths are occasioned, although thirty-three of the fighters are laid sprawling in a dunghill, and seven made fast in the stocks. Having thus given vent to their superfluous energies the whole company betake themselves to dancing, the chief part of which is called the salmon-dance, consisting of active leaps like those of the fish from which it is named; and at the close the bagpiper, who has played to them for half a day, demands three halfpennies as his hire. In this manner the day is passed, and at night the several parties return to their homes, with abundance of love-making by the way.

In turning to the sports and amusements of the period we find that they differed little from those of England. Hunting and hawking were the chief out-of-door amusements of the nobility, as they had been throughout Europe at large from time immemorial; and the strict parliamentary laws, so frequently repeated, show that the Scottish nobles were careful in the preservation of their game as one of their choicest privileges. None, therefore, were allowed to destroy the nests or eggs of wildfowl, or the fowls themselves while moulting, or to kill hares or rabbits during the time of snow, and more especially deer, roes, or does at the same period, under severe penalties. Stealing hounds and hawks, and in any way trespassing upon preserves and inclosures; robbing nests of their young or even their eggs, and invading fish-ponds, were also punished with fines varying according to the nature of the trespass. Even already these birds and beasts were as exclusively the property of the great as the lands themselves on which they found shelter. As for tournaments, they seem to have become less frequent than ever, having been little encouraged either by James I. or his son and grandson; and it is not unlikely that these sovereigns were aware of the facility with which such meetings might

¹ *Acts of the Parliaments of Scotland*, ii. p. 144.

have been perverted to the purposes of lawless and treasonable combinations. Of the home and indoor amusements of the nobles we have occasional notices during this period, and first of these was the jester—

“With club, and cote, and monie bel to ring.”

His party-coloured coat, his cap surmounted with asses' ears, his morris-bells, and his bauble are too well known to require description. The minstrel, always a musician and sometimes a poet, was also a state-officer in a nobleman's castle, and this especially in consequence of the cultivation of music under James I. and his grandson. We have already noticed the juggler as a welcome guest among the great, whose half-enlightened minds were well fitted to enjoy his wonderful feats and transformations, which they could scarcely believe to be natural or within the compass of human dexterity. Of sedentary games, we read of chess and draughts; and from a slight notice in one of the tales of the *Priests of Peebles* we find that games of chance with dice were also used, and that men had already learned to impoverish themselves by this kind of amusement.¹ *Pawme* or tennis was also a favourite game among the Scottish nobility, and it was in consequence of his devotedness to it that James I. was deprived of an outlet of escape when his assassins had entered the monastery. Of the games of the commons the chief were golf and football, the first being exclusively Scotch, while the latter was common both to England and Scotland. Notice has been already taken of the parliamentary enactments against these games, from their tendency to withdraw the people from the cultivation of archery; and in reverting to English history we find that similar prohibitions had been necessary in the south at an earlier period, on account of the interference of popular games with the practice of the bow at the parish meetings and competitions.

Of the costume of the commons at the commencement of this period the notices are so scanty, that the whole subject may be dismissed in a single sentence. Men sometimes wore hats of birchen twigs platted or interwoven: the chief parts of the female dress about which there is any mention are kerchiefs, hoods, and tippetts. This is all the notice we have of costume in the time of James I., and it occurs in his poem of

¹ “At hasard wald he derflie play at dyse;
And to the taverne eith he was to tyse.

He weips nocht for na warld's welth, nor win,
Quhil drink and dyce have pourit him to the pin.”

Priests of Peebles, p. 11; Lond. 1792.

“Peblis to the Play;” but we may imagine that, besides these, men wore doublet, cloak, and trousers, whatever might be their fashion, colour, and material; and that women were furnished with the kirtle or close gown, besides the neck and head dresses already mentioned, even though they might have neither mantle nor petticoat. We can also suppose that bare feet were commonly exhibited by both sexes even at church and market, and that shoes were generally considered as a luxury, or even a superfluity. Ascending to the higher classes our knowledge is more ample both from incidental notices and the sumptuary laws which were enacted by parliament. Shirts of linen were now in use among the higher classes. Their caps were of silk or velvet ornamented with plumes or jewelry; and lords or knights, whose revenue amounted to two hundred marks yearly, were allowed to wear silk and the finer furs among their clothing. From these edicts we also learn that cloth of gold had entered into use and formed the material of the cloaks and robes of the highest nobles. In advancing to the reign of James II. we find a still higher state of comfort in the costume of the lower orders; and the improvement is pretty distinctly marked in the parliamentary prohibitions which were issued to check it. By these citizens or burghers, who were now growing rich, and naturally willing to enjoy their riches, were ordered to lay aside their gowns of silk or scarlet cloth, and their mantles trimmed with the fur of martins, unless they were aldermen or bailies. In like manner their wives and daughters were prohibited not only from the use of these rich adornments, but also of long trains to their gowns, except on holidays, while they were enjoined to wear short kerchiefs with little hoods attached to them, such as were worn in Flanders, England, and other countries. It was found necessary to legislate even for the peasantry, who seem to have been following briskly in the wake of their betters; and it was ordered that “no labourers nor husbandmen wear on the work-day other than gray or white; and on the holiday only light blue, green, or red; and their wives the same, and kerchiefs of their own making; and that it exceed not the price of forty pence the ell.” After this followed a pungent prohibition, giving token that the favourite mode of Spanish love-intrigues was by no means unknown in Scotland. It was, “that no woman come to church or market with her face *mus-saled* or covered, that she may not be known, under the penalty of forfeiting the head-dress.” Even the clergy, it would appear, had also to be held in check; and it was enacted that none of them should wear gowns of scarlet or martins' furs, unless they were dignitaries of a cathedral,

doctors, or such as could spend two hundred marks yearly.

In the dresses of the nobility we have as yet seen nothing more than the materials of which they were made; but in the reign of James III. we obtain a glimpse of the several articles of wearing apparel into which they were fashioned, from the money disbursed by the royal treasurer for the king's clothing to James Hommil, the king's tailor and favourite.¹ There were shirts of fine holland. There were curches or caps, and "muchis" (probably night-caps) of the same material. Of gowns there is one of cloth of gold lined with satin; another of camlet lined with lambskin; and a third of large dimensions, called a "syde(orlong) gowne," lined with French black silk. We have a doublet of velvet, while the trimming that ornaments it consists of five ells of ribbon;—and another doublet on the sleeves of which sixteen ells of small ribbons are expended. A still smaller and more succinct article of dress is mentioned, being a jacket of satin lined with lambskin. We have a tippet of velvet lined with fine fur; and what is still more startling as an article of male attire—"ane elne of skarlett for a petticoate to the king." This last peculiarity, however, was not wholly unknown in the male royal costume of England, from whence it was probably derived by the Scots. Besides the cap we have mention both of hats and bonnets in these items of royal clothing, and doubtless of costly material, as may be judged from their prices. We have also foot socks and longsocks—the latter probably to cover the legs as well as feet—and white hose. Gloves appear to have been worn by persons of high rank and of either sex, wherever the Normans introduced their ascendancy; and they are not omitted in the accounts of James III. Even his swords for state or court occasions required the aid of tailor-craft; and we find mention of one of them having a velvet sheath; and another, a light walking-sword, with a sheath of red cramasie velvet. Out of this inventory, for want of better information, we must be content to clothe a Scottish nobleman at the close of this period: the materials are abundant enough to cover him if fancy can but put them on aright.

This king, who was famous for hoarding, left at his death a considerable collection of rich ornaments and jewelry; and from the inventory of these, which was carefully drawn up at

the accession of James IV.,² we can abundantly supply the adornments that were necessary to finish a noble costume of the period. Rings set with emeralds, rubies, and diamonds; collars of gold, with pendants of chased work; crosses of different saints and gold chains of various length and weight, from the ominous "black kist," which Earl Douglas is said to have accused as the cause of its owner's undoing, are poured out upon us in bewildering profusion. As belts or girdles also were rich and conspicuous articles of dress, these occur of several materials, but in every case "hernessit with gold." Then we have many fanciful articles for personal comfort or display that indicate a high state of refinement for the period—such as two toothpicks of gold and an earpick suspended with sundry other ornaments from a chain—a St. Michael of gold, with a pearl on his spear—a book of gold like a table, and on the clasp of it four pearls and a fair ruby—a whistle of gold, probably for summoning an attendant. How gallantly and gracefully such ornaments as these could be worn was shown in the case of Cochrane, the architect, when, as Earl of Mar, he would needs put himself in the front rank of the Scottish nobility.

Under the same class of accounts we have brief notices of the kind of dress worn by the queen and high-born ladies of her court. She and six ladies of her chamber are about to pass to Whitehorn; and she furnishes them on the occasion with livery gowns of "gray" lined with cloth of the same name, the sleeves and collars being of velvet. This is scanty information and obscure at the best; but the price charged for these gowns by Andrew Balfour, who furnished the materials, shows that they were sufficiently rich and costly, and worthy of a queen to bestow. The chief articles of her own wardrobe, which are mentioned, are the following: "A cloak and capite bern," which is supposed to have been a kind of cloak or mantle, with a small hood, and probably used in travelling. This was made of "black," and lined with "Scots black," which we may presume was cloth of an inferior quality. She has a gown of velvet lined with black; and a "sliding gown," which seems to have been an article of dress easily put on or removed. Another gown is mentioned as being of black damask lined with "cristie" gray, which is supposed to mean crisped or curled cloth. Her kirtle, a part of female attire common to Scotland and England, was of cramasie (or crimson) satin. How these important articles of dress were fashioned we are nowhere told; and in the absence of proper information it would be rash to assume

¹ Borthwick's *Remarks on British Antiquities*. Edinburgh, 1776. Pinkerton, who quotes from Borthwick this "Account, Charge, and Discharge of John Bishop of Glasgow, Treasurer to James III. for the year 1474," declares, with one of his wonted sneers, that this is the only curious article in the work.

² *A Collection of Inventories and other Records of the Royal Wardrobe and Jewel-house; and of the Artillery and Munition in some of the Royal Castles, 1488-1506*. Edin. 1815, qto.

for them the pattern of England, when they were more probably formed upon that of France, Flanders, or even her own native Denmark. Her head-dress, and of course that of the ladies of the court, was not wanting in those towering ornaments which had made the round of Europe, and which, by adding a cubit to the female stature, had roused the indignation of the church; and accordingly we find as an item "ane elne and ane halve of satyne, for turrats to the Quene." Among her head-coverings, also, were "bonnets of tire," supposed to be bonnets of tiara or turban fashion, from having cloth wreathed round them; and this graceful article of dress was in such high favour at the courts both of France and England as to be often adopted by both sexes alike. Those of the Scottish queen were covered with the same kind of cramasie satin as had been used in making her kirtle. Her collars were of satin, her tippets of satin or velvet, and her stomacher was of satin lined with ermine. Her hose were made of "five quarters of black," and her gloves, which were furnished by the "skinner," were completed by being furred with "band-ledder" (probably a well-dressed and very pliant kind of fur). When to these equipments we add riding collars made of double tartan, and her stirrup-irons covered with blue velvet, we have given all that can be learned of her attire whether in the palace or afield. But no such poverty is apparent in the inventory of her ornaments, which were worthy of any queen in Europe, and the glitter of which must have kindled the emulation of those noble dames who frequented the court. Not merely chains of gold but strings of pearl and jewels rich and rare form a striking contrast to the comparative simplicity of her wardrobe, so that from these we can only extract a few examples. One of these, "a frete of the queenis" [an amulet?] is "oure-set with grete perles sett in fouris and fouris." Another is a collar of gold, with nineteen diamonds. A third is a collar of rubies set with threes of pearl, containing thirty pearls and fifteen rubies, with a pendant having a diamond and a great pearl. A fourth is a chased collar of gold made like swans, set in gold, with sixteen rubies and diamonds, and eight white swans, and set with double pearl. A fifth is an egg of gold with four great diamonds pointed, and twenty-seven great pearls about them.

In reading over these inventories of James III. and his queen we are astounded to find that so poor a country as Scotland should contain within it such an abundance of royal treasure. But it was the king's "pose;" and instead of diffusing it abroad among his subjects, or even using it to levy soldiers for his own protection, his only pleasure was to gloat over it and his only aim

to augment it. And thus it lay or grew as unprofitably as the hidden strata of iron or coal beneath the surface, but which needed industry and enterprise to make it of any value. It was also for the most part the kind of riches most abundant in a semi-barbarous age—mere gaudy personal ornaments which were never meant for circulation. This wealth was that of a sordid, useless king, and not of a poor and starving community; and as such it tempted the cupidity of barons as greedy as himself, and who felt themselves strong enough to dispossess its helpless owner. This, indeed, seems to have been the chief motive of their rebellion; for although these treasures were seized and inventoried for the behoof of the royal heir, little of it came into his possession. Such we learn from a declaration of parliament made on the 20th of February, 1491. "It is known and understood," they said, "that our sovereign lord's father and progenitor of good mind, whom God assoilzie, the time of his decease had great treasure and substance of gold and silver coined and uncoined, and other precious jewels to great avail, the which treasure and substance came never to the hands of our sovereign lord that now is, but a small little part thereof to little avail or quantity in regard of the great treasure that he had in depose."—It was ordered, therefore, that a strict search should be made after it, especially within the shires of Lothian and Fife, and other places where the king had most resided. Terrible penalties were also denounced against the stealers and concealers, who failed to bring back their share of the treasure within forty days, and high rewards offered to those who should be the means of recovering it. But the hue and cry was useless after gold that had made to itself wings; and of the legislators themselves who passed the enactment, the most influential part were probably those who best knew and could best keep the secret. Part of this splendid jewelry under new forms may probably have blazed at the Scottish court of later generations, and part of it may still be reposing among the heirlooms of noble houses, or the collections of the antiquary.

A better era in science and literature had now commenced in Scotland, of which the erection of the University of St. Andrews by Bishop Wardlaw was the first manifestation; and Scottish students could now obtain in their own country the instruction which they had formerly been obliged to seek in England and upon the Continent. It appears, however, that the new university was far at its outset from realizing the benefits which might have been reasonably expected. The clergy, for whose instruction it had chiefly been instituted, were

already sinking into that sensual apathy which is so unfavourable for the cultivation of literature; and from their example the proud aristocracy were deterred from those studious pursuits which they thought of such little value, or that might have identified them with the slothful and luxurious *lurdanes* who could do nothing but pore over books and sing Latin canticles. It is not unlikely, also, that in the eyes of churchmen of a better stamp learning may have lost much of its former attraction by losing the charm of distance and the exciting difficulties of pilgrimage and adventure. These effects were apparent on the accession of James I., for such was still the prevalent ignorance that he was obliged to enact severe statutes against the admission of illiterate candidates into the clerical office; and among these one was that no man should be a canon in any cathedral church until he had obtained the degree of bachelor in divinity or of the canon law. To improve the means of instruction he also invited eighteen doctors of theology and eight doctors of the canon law from the Continent to settle in Scotland. At first the University of St. Andrews was nothing more than a large building of timber called the Pedagogy, in which the professors delivered their lectures; but to this was added St. Salvador's College, which was founded by Bishop Kennedy in 1455.

The example given at St. Andrews was not lost upon other parts of the kingdom; and the first to follow it was William Turnbull, Bishop of Glasgow, who resolved to distinguish his see by a university, as Wardlaw had done. He accordingly applied to Pope Nicholas V. for a bull to that effect, which was granted in 1450; and that the institution might be inaugurated with becoming importance the pontiff granted a universal indulgence to all faithful Christians who should visit the cathedral of Glasgow during the following year. The departments of learning to be taught at the university were theology, canon law, civil law, and the arts, the last comprehending ethics, logic, and physics; and that there might be no lack of students from want of sufficient encouragement the same privileges were granted to it by the papal bull which belonged to the University of Bononia (Bologna). Among these was the exemption of its members from all taxes and public burdens and from the necessity of residence upon their own cures. Another was the privilege of self-government, so that the rector and his assessors were judges in all criminal causes in which any member was a party, irrespective of the civil authority or even of clerical courts. These immunities were so tempting that during the first two years of

its institution the university numbered more than a hundred members, most of whom were regular or secular churchmen. As it was only the three faculties of theology and canon and civil law that qualified the students for high offices in the church and state, these departments in the first instance were cultivated almost to the entire exclusion of the arts; and it was only in process of time, when learning was valued for its own sake, that the latter department attained its proper rank and possessed its due proportion of students. The first building of the University of Glasgow was on the south side of the Rottenrow near the cathedral; and the institution commenced without any endowments, its privileges being judged sufficient. Gradually lands, tenements, and chaplainries were bequeathed to it, among them especially a tenement in the High Street from Lord Hamilton, upon the site where the university buildings were afterwards erected, and where the institution had its home until recently removed to the western quarter of the city.

In turning our attention to the few intellectual men who distinguished this period of our national history by far the highest place must be assigned to James I. His unjust detention in England was in some measure requited by the care bestowed upon his education, so that he not only surpassed his own rude countrymen but even those accomplished nobles who graced the court of Henry IV. and the victor of Agincourt. The ardour of his intellectual temperament combined with the solitude of his confinement naturally inclined him towards poetry, while he was so fortunate as to have for his examples the works of Chaucer and the "moral Gower," than which he could not have found more desirable models; but he soon surpassed the latter, and almost, if he did not wholly, equal the former, so that he was one of the greatest of bards before he became one of the most illustrious of kings and legislators. The sunbeam that lighted his captivity and threw its bright inspiration upon his verses—the image of Joanna Beaufort, that having once passed before him was never to be forgot—forms one of the most romantic incidents that has ever graced a poet's career; while, unlike a mere romance, it was a veritable reality crowned with a happy termination. The first view he obtained of his future mistress and bride from his window in the castle of Windsor is inferior to no description of the kind in the whole range of poetry:—

“And therewith cast I down mine eye again,
Whereas I saw, walking under the tower
Full secretly, new comyn her to pleyne,
The fairest or the freshest younge flower
That ever I saw, methought, before that hour;

For which sudden abate anon astart
The blood of all my body to my heart.

“And though I stood abased tho a lyte,
No wonder was; for why? my wittis all
Were so o’ercome with pleasance and delight,
Only through letting of mine eyen fall,
That suddenly my heart became her thrall
For ever; of free will; for of menàce
There was no token in her sweete face.

“And in my head I drew right hastily;
And eft-soones I lent it forth again;
And saw her walk that very womanly,
With no might mo but only women twain.
Then gan I study in myself, and sayn,
‘Ah sweet, are ye a worldly créature,
Or heavenly thing in likeness of nature?

‘Or are ye god Cupidis own princèss,
And comen are to loose me out of hand?
Or are ye very Nature the goddèss,
That have depainted with your heavenly hand
This garden full of flouris as they stand?
What shall I think, alas! what reverence
Shall I mester unto your excellence?’

“In her was youth, beauty, with humble aport,
Bounty, richness, and womanly feature;
God better mote than can my pen report:
Wisdom, largèss, estate, and cunning sure,
In every point so guided her measùre,
In word, in deed, in shape, in countenance,
That Nature might no more her child avance.”

The chief poetical work of James was the “King’s Quair,” of which the foregoing is an extract; and its theme is his love for his queen, and an account of the manner in which it originated. Another of his poems, entitled “Peblis to the Play,” is of a wholly different character, being mirthful in the highest degree and descriptive of the sports of the lower orders of Scotland at a fair. To his authorship has also been attributed “Christ’s Kirk on the Green,” which, however, seems rather to have been the production of his descendant, James V.; and “Falkland on the Green,” supposed to have been written in the Fifeshire dialect and to contain a description of the sports of Scotland, but of which no copy has been discovered. James, indeed, after his return to Scotland, was too fully occupied with his rebellious nobles and his plans for the national improvement to have much leisure for the cultivation of poetry or the indulgence of sportive humour.

A poet of a very different description was the well-known Henry the Minstrel, or Blind Harry, of whose personal history we have nothing more than the following brief notice of John Major:—“Henry, who was blind from his birth, in the time of my infancy composed the whole book of *William Wallace* (though for my own part I give only partial belief to such produc-

tions), and committed to writing in vulgar song, wherein he was skilled, the things that were commonly related of him. By the recitation of these histories, however, in the presence of the nobles he obtained food and clothing, which he well deserved.” Here we have a wandering bard, one of those against whose idle and vagabond life more than one severe act of parliament had been framed, but sheltered from punishment as well as received to high favour as an honourable exception to the general rule. As Major was born in 1469, the poem of *Wallace* must have been written a short time afterwards. That Henry was blind when he composed it we can easily grant, but that he was born blind is not so credible from the vividness and correctness of his descriptions. As he professes to have derived his information from a full history of Sir William Wallace written by John Blair and Thomas Gray, and as this history has been lost, it was the fashion until lately to treat Henry’s poem as a mere romance or legend unworthy of the least historical attention; but recent discoveries in Scottish archæology confirmatory of many of his statements are already turning the tide in the decried minstrel’s favour, and inducing the belief that the best part of his story is true. Of the poetical merits of the work it is more easy to speak. Henry had neither the learning, the discriminating judgment, nor philosophic spirit of Barbour; and in these respects his *Wallace* shows unfavourably by the side of the other’s *Bruce*. But in all other respects Henry is the superior poet; and the patriotism of his hero is still more resistless than his prowess as he strides onward in his career through a course of gallant action and self-denying toil until it is closed upon the scaffold. In this the great national champion of the people, although as brave and merciless as Achilles himself, has something nobler than Homer’s hero to make us love and follow him. A character so delineated, the cause in which it was embarked, and finally the martyrdom which invested it with a halo brighter and purer than that of success and triumph, have therefore made Sir William Wallace a greater hero than Bruce in the estimation of his countrymen, and caused Henry, the rude minstrel, to be prized beyond the learned and reflective Barbour. In one respect, also, the work of the former poet has enjoyed an advantage which was not accorded to the production of the latter. When the language of both writers became so obsolete as to be almost unintelligible Barbour’s *Bruce* was quietly permitted to fall into oblivion, while Henry’s *Wallace* was rescued from a similar fate by Hamilton of Gilbertfield, who modernized in the eighteenth century the anti-

quoted language of the blind minstrel of the fifteenth, so that his *Wallace* has continued to be a household book of our peasantry onward to the present day.

Another poet of the period, but of whose personal history nothing is known beyond his name, was Sir Richard Holland. Even his rank is unknown, as "Sir" was a title given to priests as well as knights, while his name is supposed to have been merely fictitious and assumed for the purpose of concealment. Following this theory some have supposed that his *Buke of the Howlat* is a severe covert satire upon James II. and the persecutors of the house of Douglas. Of his work alone, therefore, called the *Howlat*, which was written about the fifteenth century, we are entitled to speak with certainty. It is a short allegory, as obscure and unintelligible as an allegory well can be; and hence the perplexity as to its real or supposed aim, so that the only purpose that can be detected is the praise of the Douglasses, which is administered without stint. The story of the allegory is the version of a well-known fable. An owl, detecting its own ugliness, makes a piteous appeal on the subject to the peacock, the pope of birds, imploring his intercessions with Dame Nature that it may be transformed into a comely bird. In consequence of this petition an ecclesiastical council of the birds is held; but as the owl's translation cannot be fully accomplished without the consent of the secular power the Emperor Eagle must be appealed to, in consequence of which a convention of birds, both spiritual and lay, is held and sumptuously dined by the pontifical peacock. The result is that the owl obtains his request, and by the contribution of a feather from each of the guests becomes the finest bird in Scotland. But by his arrogance the owl offends his brethren, and as a consequence is stripped of his "lendings" and consigned to his former ugliness. As a poet Holland is evidently a follower of Chaucer, but at a humble distance; and the poetry of the clumsily-constructed narrative is not of a high order, except, indeed, when he speaks of the Douglasses; and then, in his descriptions of their heroic deeds and piteous downfall, his verses exhibit great vigour and much poetical tenderness. Throughout, however, they are disfigured by that artificial alliterative character which prevailed for a short time in the early poetry of England.

A less ambitious, and therefore more natural poet, who lived at the close of this period, was Robert Henryson (the old form of Henderson). He is supposed to have been a priest and notary, and also the chief schoolmaster of Dunfermline, while he is spoken of A.D. 1508 as a poet who

had been some time deceased. His works evince that he was not only a respectable scholar for the age, but of a more refined taste than the generality of his contemporaries, and his verses are characterized by a beauty and simplicity that were considerably in advance of the period. His chief work was a collection of thirteen fables, which he has amplified into tales; and the *Testament of Cresseid*, in which he daringly attempted to complete Chaucer's story of *Troilus* and *Cresseid*. But, like his predecessors, he transforms a Greek classical tale into a romance of the middle ages, and inflicts poetical justice upon the inconstant Cressida by consigning her to the spital. But the best known of his productions was the popular pastoral ballad of *Robene and Makyne*, in the style and spirit of which he may in some measure be said to have anticipated the *Gentle Shepherd* of Allan Ramsay.

These, however, although the most distinguished were not the whole of the poets whom Scotland produced during this period. This is evident from Dunbar's "Lament for the deth of the Makaris," who mentions the names of eighteen poets or makers as already dead, many of whom, therefore, may be presumed to have been living before the close of the reign of James III. One of these, Clerk of Tranent, wrote a romance of *The Adventures of Sir Gawain*, of which only two cantos have been preserved, while of the others nothing is known beyond Dunbar's brief enumeration. But such must always be the poetry of a rude country and age. Where the power of transcription is still a rare talent it is only the best, or at least the most popular productions that will be thought worthy the labour of continuation, while the rest, if committed at all to writing, will soon share the fate of the leaves of the Sybil, and be scattered to the winds.

As poetry does not depend upon intellectual cultivation, but is often at its best estate when a nation is still rude and barbarous, it chiefly serves to indicate the richness of the soil in which it grows, and the future intellectual fruits of which it is the promise. It is the language of strong emotion, and its outburst is the natural melody of a tempest. Hence the fruitfulness of Scotland in poets when learned men were so scarce and civilization as yet in its infancy. Next to poetry, if not a twin-birth, is its sister music, which, when reduced to a science, is of a more artificial character and demands higher skill and application than the construction of rhymes and measurement of stanzas. The progress of Scottish music, therefore, as far as we have hitherto traced it, was not commensurate with its poetry, but seems to have lagged behind as was the case in most other countries, so

that at the present period of our history, where good poets were so rife, we look in vain for the notice of a skilful musician. To this, indeed, James I. might be considered an exception, for his musical talents appear to have been of the highest kind. According to the testimony of Bower he sang well and played on the tabor, bagpipe, psaltery, organ, flute, harp, trumpet, and shepherd's reed. Such a variety of instruments within the compass of a single performer does not give promise either of a very complex or particularly refined state of musical science; and if it were otherwise we must still remember that it was in England that his skill was attained, and not in Scotland. But even if music was still of slow progress in Scotland it was not from want of instruments, as the following enumeration from the *Buke of the Howlat*, in which twenty-four are mentioned, will sufficiently testify:—

“The psaltery, the sytholis, the soft sytharist,
The croude, and the monycordis, the gitternis gay;
The rote, and the recordour, the ribupe, the rist,
The trumpe, and the talburn, the tympane but tray;
The lilttype, and the lute, the fydill in fist,
The dulset, the dulsacordis, the schalme of assay;
The amyable organis usit full oft;
Claryonis lowde knellis,
Portativis and bellis
Cymbuclanis in the cellis,
That soundis so soft.”

As the example of James I. may have promoted the cultivation of music, as well as introduced new instruments into Scotland, the taste of his unfortunate grandson undertook the task of advancing this progress with a zeal amounting to infatuation. This was manifested in his extraordinary attachment to William Rogers, the famed English musician, who visited the Scottish court in the train of the English ambassadors in 1474, and whom James III. honoured with knighthood and persuaded to remain in Scotland. “Under the instructions of this man, the most celebrated of his profession,” says an ancient authority quoted by Pinkerton, “numerous eminent musicians arose in the court of Scotland: and even so late as 1529 many great musicians boasted that they were of his school.” But the crowning folly of his love of music was

his seizure of the benefice of Coldingham for the purpose of augmenting the choir which he had established in the chapel-royal of Stirling. “He doubled them for that effect,” says Pitscottie, “that the one half should ever be ready to pass with him, to sing and play with him, and hold him merry; the other half to remain at home, to sing and play for him and his succession; and for this [he] made great foundation in the said chapel-royal.” If this was the real commencement of the musical era of Scotland, as some have imagined, it was certainly accompanied with strange sounds and fearful discord!

Of a still slower progress than poetry and music are the arts of painting and sculpture, and therefore, in the present state of Scottish civilization, little needs to be said of them. That the two latter must have been practised to some extent is evident from the demands which chivalry at least would make upon them for the adornments of crests and the emblematic devices painted upon shields and surcoats, as well as the necessities of religious worship, which required pictures for altar-pieces and images for the shrines. Even from the very few relics which survive as samples it would be impossible to judge of the progress which had at this time been made in Scotland, as these were in many cases the production of foreign artists. Such was evidently the case with that celebrated painting formerly at Kensington now in the palace of Holyrood. This picture, which contains portraits of the family of James III., appears from the ages of the parties to have been painted about the year 1482; and from internal evidence must have been the work of a foreigner who had visited Scotland at that period, and been welcomed by the unfortunate monarch. The personages supposed to be represented in it are James himself, his son, afterwards James IV., his queen, Margaret of Denmark, his daughters Mary and Margaret, and his father-in-law, Christiern of Denmark, in the character of St. Canute. Of this singular specimen of art at a rude stage of its modern history Pinkerton justly observes, “Hardly can any kingdom in Europe boast of a more noble family picture of this early epoch; and it is in itself a convincing specimen of the attention of James III. to the arts.”

PERIOD VII.

FROM THE ACCESSION OF JAMES IV. TO THE DEATH OF
JAMES V. (A.D. 1488 TO A.D. 1542).

CHAPTER I.

REIGN OF JAMES IV. (1488-1503).

Uncertainty of the confederate lords about the fate of James III.—They summon Sir Andrew Wood to the inquiry—His resolute conduct and answers—Coronation of James IV.—Proceedings of parliament against the adherents of his father—Various parliamentary enactments—Indignation of the late king's adherents—They rise against the new government—They are defeated at Talla Moss—Penitence of the young king for his rebellion against his father—Lord Lindsay called to trial for his appearance in arms at Sauchieburn—His blunt justification before the king and council—His cause successfully advocated by his brother—Naval victory of Wood over the English off Dunbar—His second victory off the Isle of May—Magnanimous conduct of James IV. to the English prisoners—Conspiracy to deliver up James to Henry VII.—Its obscure nature and failure—Character of James's government—His active proceedings in administering justice—His intercourse in disguise with the common people—His love of chivalry and warlike amusements—Combat between Sir Patrick Hamilton and a knight of Holland—Experiment of James to discover the primitive language of mankind—Account of a biformed person of this period—Troubles in England from pretenders to the throne—Attempts of Perkin Warbeck—He arrives in Scotland—James receives him as true heir to the English crown—He invades England in his behalf—Apathy of the English to the pretensions of Warbeck—The invasion abandoned—Another abortive invasion followed by a truce—Warbeck leaves Scotland—His subsequent fate—Account of his widow—Peace between the two kingdoms interrupted by an affray at Norham—Its dangerous consequences averted by negotiation—Treaty for a marriage between James and the daughter of Henry VII.—Attachment of James to Margaret Drummond—Her tragic end—Terms of the marriage of James to the Princess Margaret—An agreement of permanent peace between England and Scotland succeeds—Articles of the treaty—Their tenor honourable to the Scots—Arrival of the bride of James in Scotland.

AFTER the battle of Sauchieburn the confederate lords, with the young prince in their company, withdrew their forces to Linlithgow. Although their rebellion had been crowned with victory the uncertainty of the king's fate made this advantage doubtful; he might yet be alive to renew the war and take vengeance upon their treason. Perhaps, also, the remorse of the young James and the facility with which he might be withdrawn from their cause if his father still lived, may have deepened their anxiety. While they were in suspense it was told them that the two ships of Admiral Wood, called the *Flower* and *Yellow Carvel*, had been lying off and on in the Forth, and during the battle had sent their boats ashore, which returned to them with the wounded; upon which they suspected that the king might have thus been rescued, and be still under Wood's protection. Under this surmise, which bore a formidable appearance from the admiral's well-known loyalty, his matchless naval skill, and complete command of the sea, the lords marched from Linlithgow to Leith, and on their

arrival sent messengers to inquire if the king was on board either of his ships. But although his answer was in the negative, and although he invited the messengers to search the vessels for confirmation, the lords would not be satisfied, and commanded him to appear before them and answer their questions in person. To this, however, the brave sailor would not submit until they had sent the lords Seton and Fleming on board as hostages for his safe return. He then repaired to the council, and on his entrance with a train befitting his rank, and probably covered with the full panoply of knighthood, an affecting incident occurred, which shows what little personal intercourse James III. had maintained with his son during the latter years of his life. Struck with the admiral's noble bearing, the prince hastened up to him and said, "Sir, are you my father?" "I am not your father," replied Wood, who already knew that the king was dead, and who was melted to tears by the question; "but I was your father's true servant, and shall be to the royal authority till I die, and enemy to those

ADMIRAL SIR ANDREW WOOD AND JAMES IV.

Several of the most powerful Scottish nobles received scant courtesy at the hands of James III., and had to suffer the curtailment of their privileges. Being wroth at this treatment they banded themselves together, seized the young prince who was heir to the throne, held him captive while they made him king, and proclaimed civil war. When the hostile forces met at Sauchieburn, near Stirling, the army of James III. was routed, while the king himself was assassinated as he fled from the field of battle. This latter circumstance, however, was not known to the Confederate Lords, who retired with their victorious army to Leith. There they summoned Sir Andrew Wood to appear before them, because they believed that he had concealed the defeated king on board one of his ships. When the Admiral entered the council chamber a pallid incident befell; for the young king, seeing his noble bearing, exclaimed:—"Sir, are you my father?" To which strange question Sir Andrew replied mournfully: "I am not your father." From this we seem to learn how closely the boy had been kept a prisoner by the Confederate Lords.

PERIOD VII.

FROM THE REIGN OF JAMES IV. TO THE DEATH OF
JAMES V. 1542 TO A.D. 1567.

CHAPTER I.

ADMIRAL SIR ANDREW WOOD AND JAMES IV.

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ALFRED PEARSE.

ADMIRAL SIR ANDREW WOOD AND JAMES IV.

THE ADMIRAL APPEARS BEFORE THE CONFEDERATE LORDS AT LEITH (A.D. 1488), WHEN THE BOY KING, STRUCK BY HIS NOBLE BEARING, ASKS, "SIR, ARE YOU MY FATHER?"

who were the occasion of his down-putting." He was then asked by the lords if he knew of the king, or where he was; to which he answered that he did not. "Who were they that came out of the field, and passed in boats to the ships?" "It was I and my brother, ready to have wared [expended] our lives with him in his defence." "Is he not in your ships?" they demanded, and he answered boldly and sternly, "He is not; but would to God he were there in safety: I should defend and keep him scatheless from all the traitors that have cruelly murdered him;—for I hope to live to see them hanged and drawn for their demerits!" These answers, befitting an old sea-king or the admiral upon his own deck, were indignantly received by the council, who were not thus wont to be braved by men of lower degree than their own; and they would have proceeded to extremities but for the hostages they had given, and whose blood would have been required at their hands. Sir Andrew Wood was therefore dismissed unharmed, and it was well that it was so; for, alarmed at his long absence, and apprehensive of the worst, Sir Andrew's brother was making preparations for hanging the lords Seton and Fleming. Enraged at this fresh indignity, of which they were informed by the released hostages, the council applied to the mariners and skippers of Leith to muster every sail at their command, attack the ships of Wood in the Forth, and bring him prisoner before them, offering to supply men, guns, and munition for the purpose. But they were answered that Wood was so skilful in naval warfare, and his artillery and men in such perfect training, that no ten ships in Scotland might venture to assail the *Flower* and *Yellow Carvel*. On this reply the lords saw fit to postpone their revenge and adjourn to Edinburgh for the coronation of their young king.¹

To impart to this rite its wonted solemnity and make it the expression of the national choice the lords of the young king's party issued their letters throughout the kingdom, requiring all noblemen and commissioners of burghs to repair to Edinburgh and assist at the coronation of the new sovereign. But no noblemen and only a few commissioners obeyed the summons, so that James IV. was crowned at Scone either on the 24th or 25th of June, 1488, by the faction that had dethroned his father. They formed themselves into a parliament which met in October, and their proceedings chiefly consisted in justifying their rebellion and denouncing those who were opposed to it. By the act called the "Proposition of the debate of the

field of Stirling," the late king was charged with want of truthfulness in observing the engagements to which he had pledged himself to the peers in writing, his placing confidence in perverse counsels, and his partiality to the English—faults which in their eyes had warranted his dethronement. All justices, sheriffs, stewards, and other public officers who had joined him, were, if their tenure was hereditary, suspended from office for three years; churchmen who had taken arms for the king were to be handed over to their ordinary for punishment; and those heirs who had been disinherited by their fathers for adopting the cause of Prince James were to be restored to their patrimonial rights. Whatever grants had been made by the late king since the commencement of the rebellion were also solemnly revoked. All goods taken since the battle of Sauchieburn from burgesses, merchants, and men who had no landed property, even though these persons should have been the late king's adherents, were to be restored, with personal freedom and compensation—a churlish concession, and little likely to be obeyed. Other decrees were made, which concerned the maintenance of public order and the promotion of the national commerce. It was also decreed, that as the young king was now of sufficient age to form a matrimonial alliance, ambassadors should be sent to provide for him a royal mate from the courts of France, Bretagne, Spain, or other countries; a specification in which the name of England was omitted; and this embassy to consist of a bishop, an earl or lord of parliament, a priest, and a knight, whose expenses were to be defrayed by a tax laid upon the clergy, barons, and boroughs, but not upon the common people. The decision was premature, and no such embassy was sent.²

While a successful faction was thus legislating for the country at large the adherents of James III. had retired to their castles to meditate revenge, of which their empty seats in parliament was considered a sufficient notice. The new king they considered as nothing but a prisoner in the hands of regicides and traitors, and that by effecting his liberty they would discharge the duty of good subjects as well as their debts of feudal hatred. The first to commence open proceedings was Alexander Lord Forbes, who carried through Aberdeen and other towns and districts in the north the bloody shirt of their late sovereign suspended on a spear, and calling the people, both chiefs and commons, to arms. While he was thus raising so persuasive a standard of revolt in the north the Earl of Lennox was bestirring himself to

¹ Pitscottie.² *Acts of the Parliaments of Scotland.*

the same effect in the west, and having mustered a considerable force he marched northward to co-operate with the insurgents of Aberdeen. For this purpose he advanced to Stirling; but being unable to cross by the bridge, which was strongly guarded, he turned westward, intending to cross the Forth at a ford. But while he encamped for this purpose at a place called Talla Moss one of his followers, named Macalpine, betrayed him to Lord Drummond, who, assembling a few men-at-arms, set out from Stirling and made a night attack on the encampment of Lennox when all were sleeping in security. No battle but a rout followed, and what might have been a formidable army under wiser leading was scattered in a few minutes beyond the purpose or power of rallying. So contemptible, indeed, was this termination that history has not condescended to inform us whether Lennox escaped with the weakened fugitives, or was captured by the pursuers. Several prisoners were taken, but only a few of the better sort executed, among whom is mentioned the Laird of Kilcreuch, the chief of the family of Galbraith. Soon after this event Dumbarton Castle, the command of which had been committed to the Earl of Lennox before his insurrection, and which attempted to hold out against the new government, was taken, and its defenders, Lord Lyle and Matthew Stuart, made prisoners, but afterwards pardoned. Previous to this the faithless governor of Stirling Castle had been displaced and a new keeper appointed; the castle of Dunbar was ordered to be destroyed, and that of Edinburgh was surrendered at the summons of James IV. His rule was thus so firmly established that any further rising under the pretext of loyalty to the late king's memory, or for the purpose of liberating his son from the associated lords, was certain to be considered as treason and visited with its full punishment.¹

But even thus early a wound had been inflicted upon the sensitive heart of the king which the charms of royalty could not cure, and which continued to rankle until his life had closed. His reign had commenced in parricide, his throne was built over the remains of his murdered father, and the plea of youth and inexperience was insufficient to still within his soul the upbraidings of remorse. After the victory that made him a king he retired to the Castle of Stirling; and in that chapel-royal which had cost his father so dear, and to which he repaired every day at matins and even-song, he was reminded of his crime by the prayers and services that were offered for the soul of its benefactor. He applied to the dean for comfort and counsel,

which the churchman administered, but with a cautious regard to the fickleness of the youthful penitent, and the power of the lords who had as yet the chief government of the kingdom. Gentle words were administered, among which James was doubtless reminded of the efficacy of bountiful offerings to the church for the removal of every sin; and therefore, in the quaint language of Lesley, he was "mickle given to devotion and prayer, visiting religious places and doting them with diverse gifts." He also adopted that badge of penance for his crime which was afterwards so remarkable in his history; this was the iron belt or chain which he wore constantly round his waist under his clothing, and to which he added a certain number of links every year as an expiation for the part he had taken in his father's death.²

Among the cares of the new government one of the earliest and most important had been to suppress or win over those lords who had appeared in arms for James III. and were still resentful on account of their defeat. Of these the most remarkable was Lord David Lindsay of the Byres, who is supposed to have been engaged in the confederacy of Forbes and Lennox; and against him, therefore, a summons was issued early in 1489, commanding him to appear before James and his council. The dittay or charge was, "To answer for the cruel coming against the king at Bannockburn with his father, giving him counsel to have devoured the king's grace here present; and to that effect gave him a sword and a good horse to fortify him against his son." Lindsay, who knew nothing of laws except the laws of combat and battle, and who stood alone at the bar, as no advocate would undertake his cause against the king and lords, who were his accusers and judges, made answer in person and with words that must have sounded strangely even in the rude ears that listened. "Ye are all lurdanes, my lords," he said, or rather shouted; "I say ye are false traitors to your prince, and that I dare prove with my body on any of you which holds you best, from the king's grace down: for ye, false lurdanes and traitors, have caused the king by your false seditions and conspiracy to come against his father in plain battle, where that noble prince was cruelly murdered among your hands by your advice, though ye brought the king in presence for your behoof to make him the buckler of your enterprise. Therefore, false lurdanes, if the king punish you not hastily for that murder, ye will murder himself when you see time, as ye did his father. Therefore, sir, beware of them and give them no

¹ Bishop of Ross's *History of Scotland*; Buchanan.

² Bishop of Ross; Pitscottie.

credence; for they that were false to your father can never be true to yourself. Sir, I assure your grace, if your father were living, that I would take his part and stand in no awe of these false lurdanes. And likewise, if you had a son that would be counselled to come in battle against you by evil counsel of false lurdanes like these, I would take your part against them and fight against them in your just quarrel, even with three against any six of them. And these false traitors which cause you to believe evil at my hands—I shall be more true at length to your grace than they shall be!”

The rough bold speech of this Scottish Tory of the fifteenth century, the charge of treason which it so fearlessly retorted, and the wager of battle it proposed, were enough to astonish and enrage his judges; and here perhaps the trial might have been abruptly and most unpleasantly closed had not the chancellor interposed his good offices. “Sir, if it please your grace,” he said to the king in a deprecating tone, “Lord David Lindsay is but a man of the old world, and cannot answer formally to your grace, nor yet in your presence can speak reverently. Your grace must be good to him, and I trust he will come into your grace’s will.” Then turning to Lindsay, the peace-maker said, “My lord, I counsel you to come into the king’s grace’s will, and he will be good to you.” It was a smooth proposal; but as such an unconditional surrender might have been dangerous to the old lord, his brother, Patrick Lindsay, trode upon his foot to warn him against consenting. But in doing this he inadvertently set foot upon the other’s corns, who started and cried in a rage, “Loon! thou art over-pert to stamp on my foot; wert thou out of the king’s presence I would hit thee on the mouth!” Seeing that matters were only becoming worse, Patrick, who unlike his elder brother was both scholarly and eloquent, craved permission to be advocate in a case which no jurist had undertaken; and on leave being given he commenced his pleading with admirable discretion and skill. As the royal presence was enough to overawe the trial and procure a verdict unfavourable to the accused, he first objected that the king had engaged in his coronation oath neither to enter action nor give judgment against any of his lords and barons where he was himself a party, whereas here he was both party and judge. The objection was sustained and James had to withdraw from the tribunal to an inner apartment. After the removal of this formidable obstacle Patrick Lindsay proceeded to show that the summons itself was informal. “My brother was summoned,” he said, “to compare at this court and parliament within the space of

forty days, without continuation of days. No mention is made in your letter where nor in what place, but generally before the king and council at Edinburgh. And now, my lords, I believe it to be one-and-forty days; therefore the day is expired of itself, and we ought not to answer till we be new summoned and lawfully called thereto.” This demurrer was effectual; the assembled lords reviewed the summons and found that Patrick Lindsay was in the right, upon which the charge was abandoned. Lord Lindsay himself was astonished at the dexterity with which his defence was conducted and the successful result, so that he burst forth with, “Verily, brother, you have fine pyot words: I would not have trowed that you had such words. By Saint Mary! you shall have the mains of Kirkfother for it.” There was another, however, not so well pleased; this was the king himself, whose self-love had been wounded by the unexpected suspension of his authority in the trial, and he vented his wrath against the successful advocate by declaring that he would make him sit where he should not see his feet for a year. The threat was forthwith put in execution, and Patrick had to endure close imprisonment for a twelvemonth in the dungeon of the Castle of Rothesay before he became proprietor of the mains of Kirkfother.¹ But the words of the rough old Lord of the Byres seem to have sunk into the royal mind and produced a healthy effect. James was probably persuaded by Lindsay’s declaration that those who had rebelled against his father were men whose allegiance could not be trusted; and that those who, on the contrary, had endeavoured to support the falling king were the persons most likely to be faithful to his successor. He therefore not only absolved them from all further question for having taken arms against him, but gradually called them to his councils and treated them with confidence and kindness. This judicious conduct produced those beneficial effects that distinguished the whole of his reign. The feuds of the nobles subsided into a general calm; the lords and barons cordially aided him in his plans for the advancement of the kingdom; and when he fell in battle they fought for him to the last and perished at his side.

In 1490 the truce with England had either terminated or been abruptly broken, and on the 10th of August the two kingdoms were to try their prowess upon that element on which, at a future period, they were to rule as joint-sovereigns without a rival. Wood, the Blake or Nelson of his age, had been received into the royal favour, and the taste of James in nautical

¹ Pitscottie.

pursuits and his love of ship-building could not have found a better encourager and instructor. But if these studies had already commenced they were quickly interrupted by stern actual service. Five strong English ships of war entered the Forth and plundered the vessels both of Scots and strangers, to the great indignity of the kingdom and interruption of its infant traffic. In this extremity the king and council applied in vain to the ship-masters to rid them of such unwelcome visitors, but they easily found in Sir Andrew Wood a sea-champion both fit and eager for the enterprise. Rejecting their offers of aid in men and artillery, and confident in the skill of his own crews, he set sail against the enemy with no other ships than the *Flower* and *Yellow Carvel*. He fell in with the five English vessels off the coast of Dunbar, and notwithstanding the disparity of numbers commenced the encounter. The fight was long and desperate, but the skill of the Scottish admiral prevailed, so that in spite of the gallant resistance of the English they were compelled to surrender. Wood brought the five ships into Leith, while the brave deed by which he had so signally vindicated the honour of the Scottish flag endeared him to the young king and made him of high account with the nobles whom he had so lately offended.

Here, however, this important sea episode was not to terminate. The reputation of England was at stake, and Henry VII. was enraged and mortified. Eager for reprisal, and to obliterate the shame of this defeat, he issued proclamations offering a revenue of a thousand pounds annually to any of his subjects who would encounter Sir Andrew Wood and bring him to England either alive or dead; but for some time the lure was insufficient to tempt any of his sea-captains to such a doubtful adventure. At length a bold naval commander, called Stephen Bull, undertook the task; and being furnished with three strong ships well provided with hardy sailors and store of artillery, he entered the estuary of the Forth and took his station behind the Isle of May, watching for the arrival of Sir Andrew, who had sailed to Flanders, but whose return was daily expected. That he might also be certain of the ships whose coming he awaited, he captured some fishermen, whom he kept as prisoners, to distinguish the *Flower* and *Yellow Carvel* as soon as they appeared. In the light of a summer morning two vessels at last came in full sail and were about to enter the Firth; the fishermen were sent aloft to the maintops to ascertain if these were the ships in question; but with Scottish caution they would not recognize them, and answered that they could not tell, until

they were quickened with the promise of being set at liberty if it was really Wood who was coming; upon which they certified the English commander that it was he indeed. Rejoiced at this assurance, Stephen Bull broached a cask of wine and made his officers and seamen drink all round; he told them to be of good courage, for that the enemy was at hand at last, and, like a stout prudent captain, he sent every man to his post and put every gun in readiness. Wood was not slow to understand these symptoms in the ships ahead of him, and welcomed the promise of encounter. He too, like Bull, set the wine aflowing and got all in readiness for action; and that nothing might be omitted he made a short pithy speech to animate his men against the odds that confronted them. "There are your enemies of England," he said, "who have sworn and vowed that they shall make us prisoners to their king. But, please God, they shall fail of their purpose. Therefore, set yourselves in order, every man in his own place. Let the gunners charge their artillery and let the cross-bows make them ready; have the lime-pots and fire-balls in our tops, and the two-handed swords in your fore-rooms; and let every man be stout and diligent for his own part and for the honour of the realm." The sun that shone full upon the English ships and sails magnified their appearance and made them loom more formidably as they came down in full canvas; but the Scots, confident in themselves and their brave commander, were as eager for action as their assailants.

The first manœuvre of Wood was to get to windward of the English, in which he succeeded; having gained the advantage of the weather-gage he bore down upon the enemy and encountered them at close quarters. A desperate hand-to-hand fight ensued that lasted through a long summer day from sunrise till evening, while the thunder of the artillery that pealed along the shores roused the inhabitants and brought them down in crowds to watch this terrible death-struggle. Night at length parted the combatants, but only to lie-to during the hours of darkness; and as soon as the morning returned the trumpets sounded, and the ships, like breathed gladiators, rushed once more to the mutual onset. They closed and grappled, and while the vessels were thus locked together the fight upon their decks was so keen that an ebb-tide and south wind drifted them to Inchcape, opposite the mouth of the Tay, unnoticed, until the Scots perceived that the enemy was at their own threshold and within their very grasp. The discovery inspired them with new life and fresh vigour; they charged as if the battle had only begun, and at

last the English were compelled to yield. Their three ships were brought into the port of Dundee, and after the dead had been buried and the wounded cared for Stephen Bull was presented as prisoner to the Scottish king. James requited the gallant victors with thanks and rich rewards; and to crown such a feat of ocean chivalry with the high courtesies of a tournament he also bestowed upon the English captain and officers several costly gifts, restored to them their ships, and sent them home to their king as a present free of ransom or condition. But to this was added a message to Henry VII. requesting him to understand that the King of Scotland had as manful men both by sea and land as his royal brother had in England. He also desired him to send none of his captains in time coming into the Scottish waters to disturb the peace of his lieges, as they should not be so well treated nor escape so easily in time coming. In this way he tempered his own romantic benevolence with kingly discretion and a due regard to the welfare of his realm; and the English king, who could understand though he scarcely would have imitated such liberality, applauded the nobleness of James' conduct.¹

Another event which occurred about the same period shows that other hostile demonstrations than those of naval warfare were employed against James by the English king. This was nothing less than a conspiracy on the part of Henry VII. to have the person of James delivered into his power. Unfortunately the particulars of this nefarious design are so scanty and so obscurely related that we can discover neither its motive nor its ultimate aim. John Ramsay, favourite of the late king, who had been raised to the dignity of Lord Bothwell, and who had fled to England on the death of his royal master; the Earl of Buchan, who had lately been pardoned for his appearance in arms against the new sovereign at the battle of Sauchieburn; and Sir Thomas Tod of Sereshaw, one of the Scottish king's servants, entered into a compact with Henry by which they engaged to seize and deliver the Scottish king and his brother, the Duke of Ross, into the hands of the King of England. To aid them in their design Henry advanced two hundred and sixty-six pounds—not, however, as a gift or even as wages, but a loan, for the repayment of which on a stipulated day the royal broker received Tod's son as a hostage. Several other disloyal Scots appear to have acceded to this plot of kidnapping, whose names are not mentioned in the few documents that have been found of it; and as if to facilitate the deed a friendly treaty

for the maintenance of peace on the borders of the two kingdoms was at this time in agitation between England and Scotland.² But here all further notice breaks off, and nothing more is known of this suspicious transaction. Viewed in one light, it may have been nothing more than a plan of two such needy exiles as Tod and Bothwell to raise money, in which they were disappointed by the well-known parsimony of the English king. Or it may be that Henry, who was desirous of being at peace with Scotland in consequence of the pretenders by whom his reign was troubled, was desirous of securing in this rude fashion an alliance between the two kingdoms by marrying James to an English princess. At all events this last was a design of which he never lost sight until it was accomplished.

For some years after the history of Scotland is chiefly to be traced in parliamentary enactments to promote the general welfare, and in these we have the indications of peace at home and amity with foreign countries; of a better perception of the real interests of the kingdom and the improvement of the people at large. Those which chiefly concerned agriculture, commerce, and the national fisheries, the suppression of public violence and crime and the promotion of education and learning, will be detailed in a separate chapter on the progress of this period. An unwonted cordiality between the king and the nobles subsisted, and an awakening spirit was manifested among all classes, which, if allowed to go on unchecked, might in half a century have erased the havoc of whole ages. But the present was only a breathing interval, and a preparation for the endurance of fresh calamities, by which the national character was to be more fully annealed. In his character as a justiciary James not only suppressed the troubles of the Highlands by negotiating with the chiefs and securing their co-operation, but on several occasions he crossed the range of hills called "the Mounth," and penetrated into the heart of that bleak country, attended by his household lords and chief counsellors. He also made three successive voyages to the Isles, and by his example so advanced the navigation of the kingdom, that the rudest and most remote districts of Scotland were made accessible to the intercourse and civilization of the Lowlands. But these stately official visits with fleets by sea, or trains of nobles and knights by land, were not the only modes in which he came in contact with his people. Like many adventurous sovereigns from the days of Haroun Alraschid down to those of the great Napoleon, he delighted in

¹ Pitcottie.² Rymer, *Fœd.* xii. 440.

throwing aside his royalty and mingling in disguise with the common people; and he could thus gratify his love of stirring adventure and see with his own eyes the wants and condition of his subjects. "He rode out through the whole realm him alone," says the old historian,¹ "unknown that he was a king of any man, and would oftentimes lodge in poor men's houses, as he had been a travelling man through the country; and in the meantime would require of them that he was lodged with, where was the king, or how used the king himself, or how he used his lords and barons, or what they spake of him through the country: and they would answer to him as they thought good. So the king knew this way what was spoken of him through the country."

Another distinguished characteristic of James was his devotedness to the ancient usages of chivalry when they were about to disappear for ever; and in this particular he was well associated with Francis I. of France and Henry VIII. of England, the contemporaries of his more advanced years. But while these sovereigns regarded chivalry merely in its poetical aspects, or as a splendid masquerade, which could be set aside when the demands of modern warfare or politics were in question, it was in the case of the young King of Scotland the chief element of his existence, and for its splendid pageantries and punctilious observances he was ready to sacrifice the wealth and peril the safety of his poor and limited kingdom. With such a disposition it was no wonder that jousts and tournaments were more frequent in Scotland than they appear to have been in any former period; and that the institution, now a setting sun in Europe, should throw its last and brightest gleam over the cold mountain summits of the north. He proclaimed tournaments throughout the kingdom and invited to Edinburgh all who were of adventurous spirit, that they might prove their skill and prowess in the open lists, while every combatant was allowed to use the weapon in which he most excelled. Thus some careered on horseback with the lance, some encountered in full armour and with the battle-axe, and some engaged foot to foot with the heavy two-handed sword. With these were also trials of skill in the use of missile weapons; and these were a singular specimen of the old and new artillery still contending with each other for the mastery—the long bow, the cross-bow, and the culverin; while the successful competitor received for the prize a weapon of the same kind with which he had fought, but adorned with gold, gilding, or choice workmanship, "to keep in memorial of his practick and ingine,"

and his name was trumpeted by the heralds to the admiring crowd. But it was not to Scottish combatants alone that these heart-inspiring competitions were confined, the fame of such chivalrous display were bruited over Europe, and many who still preferred the old deeds of knightly derring-do to the "villainous saltpetre" which was now reducing all men to a provoking equality, repaired from every country to these widely proclaimed and oft-repeated tournaments. Nor did they come in vain; for as the historian informs us, "few were refused, but they were foughten with, and warred in singular battle with the Scottish men."² The same old writer gives a stirring description of one of these combats. A knight of Holland, whom he calls Sir John Clokehewis, came to Scotland for the purpose of trying his prowess against the Scottish knights and barons, and had his challenge accepted by Sir Patrick Hamilton, brother to that Earl of Arran who had married the king's aunt. The foreigner appears to have been a strong and well-practised champion, while Sir Patrick, a young man, active, vigorous, and full of spirit, was as yet defective in the experience and accomplishments of the tourney. The lists were set under the castle wall of Edinburgh; the king, his nobles, and a crowd of citizens were the onlookers and judges of the passage of arms; and at the sound of the trumpet the combatants closed and shivered their lances in the shock of the encounter. They called for new spears and began to run a fresh course; but before they met Sir Patrick's horse swerved, and would not abide the meeting. Alighting, therefore, from his steed, and ordering a two-handed sword to be brought to him, Sir Patrick invited his antagonist to do the like, observing, "A horse is but a weak warrant when men have most ado." The challenge was accepted, and a combat on foot commenced, in which terrible strokes were dealt on either side; the combatants warmed with this close encounter, and even its equality threatened nothing less than a deadly issue. At length Sir Patrick rushed upon the Hollander and planted upon his crest such a staggering blow as brought him to his knees. This was enough for honour and victory: the king threw his hat over the castle wall into the lists, at which signal the judges and men-at-arms parted the combatants, and Sir Patrick was proclaimed conqueror by sound of trumpet.³

It was not, however, merely in the accomplishments of a gallant, well-trained knight that James excelled, for he was not only a lover of music and poetry, as had been the case with the

¹ Pitscottie.² Pitscottie.³ Ibid.

votaries of chivalry in every age, but of the arts and sciences in general, and especially of medicine and surgery, so that he might be accounted very learned for a Scotchman of the period, irrespective of his royal rank. One singular proof which he gave of his literary curiosity and love of inquiry reminds us of the old story of the Egyptian king. Like him James wished to ascertain what language the human race had originally spoken; and like him, also, he attempted to solve the question by bringing up an infant out of all hearing of human speech, and ascertaining to what tongue its first utterances belonged. Two babes were accordingly delivered to the charge of a dumb woman to be brought up by her in the solitary islet of Inchkeith; and when their season for speech had arrived all the learned ears of the land were pricked up as if they waited for the voice of an oracle. But here, unfortunately, the trial, like an alchemist's experiment, broke down at the moment of projection; and although the children appear to have gabbled, the learning of the country was insufficient to translate what they said, or even to decide whether the sounds were speech or unmeaning noise. The result appears to have been hushed up under the shame of failure and disappointment. Pitscottie abruptly ends the short and strange narrative with, "Some say they spake good Ebrew; but as to myself I know not but by the author's report."

Another proof which James gave of his love of learning and elegant accomplishments was of a more interesting character, as well as more mournful result. A child had been born in Scotland bifurcated to the waist, the upper part being placed back to back, with two heads each furnished with the usual organs of the senses, and having four arms, while below the junction there was but one trunk and two legs. It was a Siamese twinship, but one of a still closer and more vital connection. Interested by this living prodigy the king caused the strange duality to be carefully educated; and the result was, that they could speak in Latin, French, Italian, Spanish, Dutch, Danish, English, and Gaelic. They also were accomplished in music, and could play and sing in two parts, the one the treble, and the other the tenor. Thus they lived twenty-eight years when that peculiar close to their existence arrived, which must have been often anticipated with a shudder. One of them sickened and died, and the other twin being was doomed to that worst of tortures which Mezentius was said to have inflicted upon his victims. It was in vain to offer consolation, or bid him cheer up; every word of his answer was a death-knell: "How can I be merry that have my true marrow [mate] as a dead carrion about my back,

who was wont to sing and play with me? When I was sad he would give me comfort, and I would do the like to him. But now I have nothing but dolour of the bearing so heavy a burden, dead, cold, and unsavoury on my back, which taketh all earthly pleasure from me in this present life: therefore I pray to Almighty God to deliver me out of this present life, that we may be laid and dissolved in the earth wherefrom we came." His prayer was granted, for it was not possible that this life-in-death existence could long continue. Such is the strange story which bears too many marks of truth and sad reality to be thrown aside as a mere invention.¹

As yet the reign of Henry VII. had been so insecure that he had the strongest motives for avoiding a rupture with Scotland; and for this forbearance he had been rewarded by the facility with which he had crushed every attempt at insurrection devised by the discontented Yorkists. Their chief policy was to propagate a report that the two sons of Edward IV., instead of being murdered in the Tower by their uncle, had been conveyed to a place of safety, and would reappear in due season. But besides these there was the young Earl of Warwick, son of the Duke of Clarence, whom the jealous Henry had so closely mewed up in the Tower that the people were almost unaware of his existence. It was easy, therefore, to find a puppet to personate any of these young princes as a rallying point for rebellion; and a commencement was made with the Earl of Warwick, who, it was pretended, had escaped from confinement, and found refuge at the court of his aunt, the Duchess of Burgundy. Aided by a Burgundian force, and accompanied by several lords of the York faction, a youth soon after landed in Ireland bearing the title of the Earl of Warwick, and was received by the people as their veritable king, after which he crossed to England, and advanced into the country until he was met and routed at Stoke; and on being taken prisoner was found to be no other than Lambert Simnel, the son of a baker. The next attempt was better planned, and of a more dangerous character. It was that of Perkin Warbeck, who also had been set up by the Duchess of Burgundy, and who, like Simnel, commenced his attempt in Ireland, where the people were more credulous, and enjoyed fewer opportunities of detecting the imposture. He pretended to be the Duke of York, the second son of Edward IV., and that he had been spared by the murderers who had assassinated his brother. After an obscure life of wandering on the Continent he had repaired to Burgundy, where, on

¹ Pitscottie.

being recognized by the duchess as the orphan son of her brother by indubitable tokens, he was welcomed as the true heir of England, and treated with royal honours. But Ireland was so well guarded, and his proceedings so closely watched, that he passed over upon a desperate adventure to England, attended only by a few followers, most of whom were taken prisoners as soon as they landed; and thus repulsed he was fain to hoist sail and make his escape to Flanders. Baffled alike in his attempts to form a prevalent party in France, Ireland, and England, all of which countries he had attempted in vain, this restless and most plausible adventurer now bethought himself of Scotland, where the love of warlike enterprise and hereditary hatred of England promised him a more ready support. Even before he commenced his reckless enterprise Warbeck is supposed to have been in communication with James, and it is believed that the application of the young pretender was strongly seconded by the relentless Duchess of Burgundy, who appealed to the young Scottish king's sense of honour and his chivalrous disposition to succour the distressed. It is not impossible, also, that her appeals were backed by the persuasions of a good subsidy, and that gold, which the duchess could well spare, found its way into the scanty treasury of Scotland. In the meantime the English king, whose jealous eyes were everywhere, appears to have taken alarm at this intercourse between the Scottish and Burgundian courts, and to have suspected their bearing. To prevent an alliance which had his own dethronement for its object he offered to prolong the truce between him and James during their lives, and to give his infant daughter, now only six years old, in marriage to the Scottish king. But James was in no mood to espouse a child whom, however, he took for his bride eight years afterwards, when the peaceful relationships of the two countries were better established, and therefore he received the present offer with cold indifference. Perhaps he could not also as yet forget the manner in which the earlier part of his reign had been disturbed by the machinations of Henry.

In November, 1495, Perkin Warbeck arrived in Scotland. Whatever misgivings James may have entertained of his pretensions appear to have been removed by the presence of the young adventurer, whose personal beauty, princely demeanour, and winning manners had been sufficient to persuade several of the English nobles that he was indeed the Duke of York, the younger son of Edward IV. Warbeck, also, must at this period have been only about twenty-one years old, in order the more com-

pletely to pass for the prince he so successfully personated; and James, who was about the same age, would have his sympathy increased for the stranger by this otherwise trivial coincidence. He therefore welcomed him with affectionate ardour, recognized the reality of his claim to the English crown, honoured him with the title of cousin, and lodged him and his train with royal honours in the palace of Stirling. Tournaments and court pageants followed to welcome the noble stranger, and he accompanied the Scottish king over the country, winning, wherever he came, the nobles and chief men to the reality of his alleged descent and the justice of his claims. And as if all had not been enough to prove the sincerity of James's belief, he bestowed upon Warbeck the hand of Lady Catherine Gordon, daughter of the Earl of Huntly, a lady distinguished for her virtue, beauty, and accomplishments, and nearly related to his own family.¹

Nothing now remained for James but to vindicate the rights of his royal guest and kinsman by a hostile march into England, and speedily the land began to ring with the din of warlike preparations. Weapon-shaws were appointed, the military force of the kingdom was ordered to hold itself in readiness, and a correspondence was opened with those nobles in England and Ireland who favoured the cause of Warbeck. So earnest, indeed, was James in these preparations, that when his money was exhausted he coined his plate and gold chains to defray their expenses. In the meantime Warbeck could give nothing but promises, and of these he was not sparing; for he engaged, in the event of success, to surrender Berwick to the Scottish king and give fifty thousand marks to be paid in two years. An ambassador also arrived from France, ostensibly to recommend peace between the two kingdoms, but whose real mission was evidently of a different character; for he was the Lord of Concessault, who had been commander of the body-guard of Warbeck when the latter was in France. Another arrival in Scotland about the same time was that of Roderic de Lalain, who brought sixty German men-at-arms from Flanders, and a supply of arms, harness, and military stores from the Duchess of Burgundy. But the King of England in the meantime had not been idle, and with his favourite weapons of craft and cunning he was more than a match for the frank, impetuous James and his uncalculating nobles. For his spy in Scotland he had Ramsay of Balmain, otherwise Lord Bothwell, once the favourite of James III., through whom he was advertised of every step of these proceedings, and the best means to defeat them. Henry,

¹ Bishop of Ross.

also, was in communication with several Scottish lords to whom the invasion of England for the sake of Warbeck was distasteful, and among these were the Duke of Ross, brother of James, the Earl of Buchan, and the Bishop of Moray, who had engaged to do their utmost to hinder the expedition. Even the seizure of the person of Warbeck himself in his tent, and his delivery as a prisoner to Henry, was planned between Buchan, Ramsay, and an English envoy, and might have been successful, but for the carefulness with which the pretender's tent was guarded.¹

With a numerous army but under such doubtful leaders James ventured to resume the long-discontinued war with England. The recovery of Berwick to the Scottish crown, the chastisement of the cold and cunning Henry whom he had little cause to love, and above all, the glory of restoring a wandering unbefriended prince to the throne of his ancestors, were sufficient motives for the Scottish king to disturb the peace of the two kingdoms and commit all to the hazard of failure. At Ellame Kirk, within a few miles of the Border, he proclaimed war in due form and commenced his march. At the same time Warbeck issued a manifesto or proclamation as Richard Duke of York, true heir to the English crown, in which he stigmatized Henry as a usurper, upbraided him with the murder of several English nobles whom he had executed as traitors, accused him as an invader of the rights of the church and a pillager of the people; and after promising to redress these wrongs and grievances he ended by offering a reward of a thousand pounds to whomsoever would bring him Henry's head. But contrary to the hopes both of James and Warbeck, who had expected a rising upon the English Border in their favour, the people remained quiet; they had no wish to be delivered from Henry Tudor by one whose claims were so doubtful, and which were supported by their old hereditary enemies, while the ten or twelve hundred men, chiefly desperadoes from every country of the Continent, who accompanied the mock-sovereign as auxiliaries and body-guards, only deepened the anger or contempt with which his coming was welcomed. Enraged at this inertness and the disappointment of his expectations, the Scottish king began to waste and plunder Northumberland in the old merciless fashion of Border warfare; and when Warbeck interposed and entreated him to spare his subjects James replied with a sneer, "You do well to be anxious about a nation that refuses to receive you either

as king or subject!" As the season had been considerably advanced before the expedition commenced, the arrival of winter was more effectual than the entreaties of Warbeck; and James, after this brief and indecisive inroad, was obliged to lead his army back to Scotland.²

It was now time for Henry to make reprisals, and he commenced by imposing a heavy tax for the maintenance of a Scottish war. It was, indeed, his usual pretext when no warfare was seriously intended, and in this way he filled his coffers during the whole of his reign at the expense of his duped and impoverished subjects. But before his preparations could be ripened for action a revolt broke out in Cornwall from the refusal of the natives of that quarter to submit to the tax, and the forces that had been raised for the invasion of Scotland were sent to quell the insurrection. But to guard the borders against the Scots the Earl of Surrey was sent thither to gather a sufficient army among the men of Northumberland and Durham; and in the meantime James, profiting by the difficulties of the English king, made a fresh inroad, in which, after throwing down several houses and castles, he laid siege to the castle of Norham. This strong place, however, was so well garrisoned and supplied by Richard Fox, Bishop of Durham, that James made no progress in the siege, and on the advance of the Earls of Surrey and Northumberland he retired into Scotland. These indecisive operations show how little the cause of Warbeck had interested the Scots, and how greatly they had already abated in their fierce hatred of the English.³ Henry, who had no desire either for the glory or the expense of war, and who was little moved by these late provocations, now renewed his negotiations for peace with Scotland, and his proposal of a marriage between James and his daughter Margaret. The result was an agreement to a truce between the two kingdoms for seven years, which soon after, it was agreed, should be continued during the lives of the two kings, and a year after the death of the survivor.

It was now apparent that the cause of Perkin Warbeck had little to expect from the Scots, and that his further residence in Scotland might be dangerous to himself through the machinations of the English king. Henry, indeed, in his late negotiations with James, had desired that Warbeck, as a rebel and the cause of the late war, should be delivered up a prisoner into his hands; but though James with proper spirit refused to comply, the English king had other modes of capturing his enemy which he

¹ Letters of Ramsay of Balmain to Henry VII. quoted in Pinkerton's *History of Scotland*, vol. ii. pp. 27, 28.

² Bishop of Ross; Buchanan.

³ Bishop of Ross's *History of Scotland*, p. 65, 4to ed. 1830.

was not likely to be scrupulous in using. But besides keeping open the breach between the two kingdoms, the maintenance of Warbeck and his followers in Scotland was a serious incumbrance to James, whose scanty revenues were ill able to support his profuse munificence. A ship was accordingly prepared at Ayr furnished with every comfort befitting a royal personage, and commanded by Robert Barton, next to Wood the best naval commander in Scotland; and in this the adventurer embarked, accompanied by his wife and a train of thirty horse, on the 6th of July, 1497. The subsequent career of Warbeck, though sufficiently romantic and disastrous, belongs more properly to English history, so that it is sufficient to state that he again proceeded to Ireland and afterwards to Cornwall; and that in the latter county, where he attempted to raise an insurrection, he was defeated, taken prisoner, and confined in the Tower of London, and finally, after various intrigues to escape from confinement, executed at Tyburn in 1498 as a common malefactor. Of his beautiful high-born wife, Catherine Gordon, who devotedly adhered to his dangerous fortunes when all the world had forsaken him, a few words will suffice. On her husband's landing in Cornwall she was sent for safety to the shelter of St. Michael's Mount; and Henry, after Warbeck's defeat, paid her a visit from a surmise that she might become a mother, in which case the civil contentions of England between the houses of York and Lancaster might be renewed; but while he was gratified to find that his fears were unfounded, he was charmed by her virtues and amiable qualities, so that he recommended her to the charge of his queen, and settled upon her a pension which continued to be paid after his death. After the execution of her husband she married Sir Matthew Cradock of North Wales, by whom she became the ancestress of the earls of Pembroke. During the whole of her life she seems to have been endeared to the English, who, in allusion to her first husband's pretensions, bestowed upon her the title of the "White Rose of Scotland."¹

In 1498, the year after Warbeck's departure from Scotland, a trivial event occurred which threatened to involve the two kingdoms in a fresh war. A few Scottish youths of the Border, some of them of good family, had been wont to spend their holidays during the late periods of truce in the town of Norham, upon the opposite bank of the Tweed. Encouraged by the peaceful state of affairs they now

renewed the practice, but instead of being received with welcome they were attacked by the garrison of the castle, who accused them of coming as spies; and in the quarrel some of the visitors were killed, others wounded, and the rest driven across the river. The warden courts of both borders endeavoured to compromise the matter, but unsuccessfully, and James, when it was brought before his notice, declared that nothing in the course of nature was more certain than that no peace could exist between England and Scotland. Indignant at what he deemed a deliberate insult, he sent a herald to the English court to demand satisfaction, and in the event of a refusal to denounce immediate war. It was well for both kingdoms that Henry VII. was as peaceful as he was politic, so that he could receive the message without a counter-defiance. Alive to the importance of peace with Scotland, both for the interests of his kingdom and the security of his own establishment on the throne, he listened to the herald with courtesy, professed his ignorance of the event and sorrow that it had happened, and promised that if his subjects should be found the aggressors James should have full satisfaction. An answer so conciliatory was regarded with suspicion, while its temperate character only made the young Scottish king the more furious; he declared that Henry was tampering with him by equivocation and delay, and he would have proclaimed war at once had not Fox, Bishop of Durham, to whom the castle belonged, been commissioned by his master to explain the accident and prevent its consequences. The letter which the bishop wrote to the Scottish king was so satisfactory that James appointed an interview to be held between them at Melrose, and there the arguments and flattery of the prelate soon convinced the Scottish king that peace was best for the interests of both countries. Soon after this, on July 20th, 1499, the proposal of a continuation of the truce during the lives of the two sovereigns was finally ratified.² During the same year a defensive alliance was established between Scotland and the kingdoms of France and Denmark. But by far the most important of the treaties of this period in its immediate, but still more its remote effects, was that which concerned the marriage of James to the Princess Margaret, daughter of the King of England. Upon this union, as we have already seen, Henry had for a long time set his heart; and now that the angry mood of James was propitiated and peace established in Scotland the most favourable season for the renewal of the proposal had arrived. The negotiation

¹ Bishop of Ross; English Histories; Stewart's *Genealogy*, p. 65; Dugdale's *Baronage*, ii. p. 255.

² Bishop of Ross; Buchanan; Rymer, *Fœd.* xii. p. 728.

was intrusted to Fox, Bishop of Durham, whose talents, eloquence, and ingratiating manners had recommended him to James; and under the management of this able diplomatist the terms of the union were satisfactorily adjusted and finally signed in the palace of Richmond on the 24th of January, 1502. In consequence of the immature age of the bride, who had not yet completed her twelfth year, it was agreed that the consummation of the marriage should not take place before the 1st of September, 1503, at which time she was to be sent down to Scotland.

Independently of political considerations it was doubly desirable that James should espouse a queen, to whatever country or family she might belong. His adventurous habits and mode of living might at any moment be abruptly ended without an heir to succeed him in the throne, while the numerous amours in which he indulged were subversive of his duties as a king. In this last predilection he evinced a characteristic that distinguished the house of Stewart from its commencement to its close. Even before, as a mere stripling of sixteen years, he succeeded to the royal seat, and when he was only Duke of Rothesay, he had formed an attachment to Margaret Drummond, daughter of Lord Drummond; and only two months after the coronation her name is set down in the expenditures of the royal treasurer's books, giving evidence that she was already the court mistress of James. But ardently though he might love her, and notwithstanding the gay pageants and sumptuous festivals which he devised for her entertainment, James was not to be confined to one object of illicit love; and previous to his marriage three other ladies of noble rank, and a fourth, the daughter of a private gentleman, had made him the father of illegitimate children, without reckoning those of a lower grade among whom his roving affections had been squandered, but of whose trespasses no record had been kept. Margaret Drummond, however, continued to retain her ascendancy; but the splendid establishment he maintained for her and the costly gifts he lavished upon her, his growing affection, and his occasional symptoms of reluctance as the time appointed for the English marriage drew near, were enough to make his lords and counsellors apprehensive that the daughter of a new-made Scottish lord instead of the offspring of the Tudors and Plantagenets might become their future queen. It may even then also have been whispered, what was afterwards written in the record of the house of Drummond, that James and his beautiful mistress had already been united by a secret marriage, and that as they were within the numerous prohibited degrees of which the

church made so profitable a traffic, nothing was needed but the papal dispensation, and that this dispensation had been already obtained. Thus a second queen of the inferior race of the Drummonds might again sit upon the Scottish throne. Well might the prelates and nobles of Scotland pray for the dispersion of this ominous cloud by the arrival of the English princess. But whether they prayed or plotted the result was in conformity with their wishes. One morning after breakfast at Drummond Castle Margaret and her sisters, Euphemia and Sybilla, were suddenly seized with an excruciating illness under which the whole three died a few hours after. That this was the work of poison was naturally surmised, but by whom administered or from what motive it was impossible to discover. It was a deed more characteristic of subtle and refined Italy under the rule of the Borgias and the Medici than of Scotland, where hatred scorned to wear a mask and fought out its quarrel with equal weapons. The bodies of the unfortunate sisters were hastily removed, as if to prevent all inquiry, and interred together in the centre of the choir of the cathedral church at Dunblane, while three plain slabs of blue marble marked the place where they lay, and two priests were appointed by the king, who to the end of his reign sang masses for the soul of Margaret.¹

The time having arrived when the marriage of James with the English princess was to be solemnized, preparations were made in England for her departure and in Scotland for her reception. They were of a sufficiently splendid character, yet not beyond the importance of an event which was ultimately to compose the strife of centuries and unite the crowns of the two rival kingdoms upon one head. The extreme youth of the princess and the indifference of James to the proposal had not been the only obstacles which Henry had to surmount; there were also the hostile differences of the two nations to compose, and the pride of the English nobles to be reconciled to a marriage which they thought might at some distant period give them a Scot for their sovereign. But Henry, whose whole life had been spent in difficulties, had advanced cautiously in his purpose step by step until every impediment was surmounted. As everything connected with such a marriage is important, the articles of agreement, which had been settled at the palace of Richmond, may here be properly introduced with some minuteness. They were to the following effect:—

1. That James at Candlemas next should

¹ Pinkerton's *History of Scotland*, vol. ii. p. 37, 4to, Lond. 1797; Tytler's *History of Scotland*, vol. iv. appendix, letter L.

personally or by proxy marry the Princess Margaret; and that no exceptions should be made on account of consanguinity, that bar having been removed by the papal dispensation.

2. That the princess shall be conveyed to Scotland at the expense of her father, and be delivered to her husband, or any person commissioned to receive her, at Lamberton Kirk, about the beginning of September, 1503, and not before.

3. That before the first day of July, 1503, the princess shall receive legal seisin of all the lands, castles, and other possessions usually held by the queens-dowagers of Scotland; and if these lands be not found to yield the yearly revenue of two thousand pounds of English money, or, which was then the equivalent, six thousand pounds of Scottish money, that her husband shall assign to her as many other lands as will supply the deficiency.

4. That it shall be allowed to the princess to have always with her twenty-four servants of the English nation, men or women, as she shall incline, besides her Scottish domestics; and that her whole household thus composed shall be maintained at the charge of her husband, who shall also allow her the yearly sum of a thousand pounds Scots, or five hundred marks sterling, to be paid in equal sums at the feasts of Easter and Michaelmas, for her private purse.

5. That in the event of the death of the king, her husband, she shall be allowed to reside within or out of the kingdom of Scotland, as she shall judge fit, and that in either case her jointure shall be faithfully paid.

6. That the king, her father, shall pay as her dowry thirty thousand pieces of gold, called angel-nobles, or their equivalent in the current coin of England, of which ten thousand shall be paid at Edinburgh eight days after the consummation of the marriage, other ten thousand on the same day of the ensuing year 1504, at Coldingham, and the last ten thousand towards the end of the next year, 1505.

7. That should Margaret die without issue before the complete payment of her portion, what is unpaid shall be no longer due; but if she should leave issue the whole shall be faithfully paid as if she were still alive.¹

In the monetary part of this treaty the craft and avarice of Henry VII. can be clearly discerned: while stipulating for much he is still more anxious to grant little in return. His daughter's maintenance was to be upon an ample scale, while he allows her nothing more than a dowry of thirty thousand angels, each angel being worth 6s. 8d. or half a mark. But

thirty years earlier, when money was more valuable, Edward IV. had given with his daughter, a portion of twenty thousand marks, though his son-in-law was not king but only Prince of Scotland. Henry, moreover, was careful to retain possession of Berwick, a national advantage so highly prized as to be of itself worth the whole dowry. But these conditions were only a prelude to the terms of a perpetual peace between the two kingdoms, which were ratified upon the same month (January, 1502) to the following effect:—

1. That in all time coming there shall be a sincere, complete, and inviolable peace between the two kings, their heirs and lawful hereditary successors, their kingdoms, and subjects of whatever class and condition.

2. That neither of these kings shall favour the rebellious subjects of the other, directly or indirectly, but, on the contrary, shall imprison them as soon as they are known to be rebels.

3. That all safe-conducts granted, or promises made to any of the English rebels by King James, shall be recalled and never renewed; and *vice versa*.

4. That if either king be attacked the other shall assist him as soon, and with as many forces as shall be required, provided that the assisting troops be paid by the king who is assailed; nor shall any former league be pleaded as an obstacle to this agreement.

5. That the King of Scotland shall not molest nor besiege the town or castle of Berwick, nor shall their inhabitants disturb the subjects of the Scottish king.

6. That the fifth garth of Esk shall be equally free to the subjects of both kingdoms, so that either the Scots or the English may break or repair, without being quarrelled by either of the kings.

7. That the allies of both kings shall be comprehended in the treaty if they are willing, *viz.* the Kings of the Romans, France, Spain, Portugal, and Denmark, the Archduke of Austria, the Dukes of Venice, Ferrara, and Savoy, and the Hanse towns of Germany on the part of Henry; and on that of James, the Kings of the Romans, France, Denmark, Spain, the Archduke of Austria, the Dukes of Gueldres, Alsace, and Cleves, and the Marquis of Brandenburg. These, if they do not notify their acceptance of the offer within eight months, are to be considered as excluded. As also, that if the King of England should make war with any of these allies of the Scottish king, the latter may assist his ally with auxiliary forces sent to his aid and defence, but shall not offer to make a diversion in behalf of his ally by attempting anything against England itself. And the same rule to be binding

¹ Rymer, *Fœd.* xii. 787-791.

on the English king in the event of a war of the Scots against any of his allies: so that the peace between the two kingdoms shall remain inviolable as before.

8. That should either King James or the Princess Margaret die before the consummation of their marriage, the peace shall nevertheless continue unless the successor of either king make known to the other within two months after such decease, that he will not adhere to the treaty.

9. That though the peace should not take effect from the above-mentioned causes, yet the truce formerly concluded shall continue during the life of both kings, and one year longer.

10. That both kings shall obtain a ratification of the present treaty from the pope before the first day of July, 1503, and that the party breaking it shall submit himself to the sentence of excommunication, and be actually excommunicated.¹

Upon these terms the treaty was ratified, which, it was hoped, would bestow the blessings of perpetual peace upon both nations. It was the first of the kind that had been subscribed since that which Robert Bruce had made with England during the minority of Edward III., but which was so speedily broken, and since that period an hundred and seventy years had elapsed of keen and destructive contests between the English and the Scots, only interrupted by short truces that were observed no longer than suited the interests of the combatants. After so long a conflict between nations so unequally matched in wealth, numbers, and warlike resources, and even in military skill and experience, it will be perceived that the English neither demanded, nor the Scots conceded anything incompatible with the national rights and independence of the latter; the old claim of homage was not even mentioned, by which England had been wont to assert her superiority over Scotland, and not an acre of territory within the old Scottish boundary was demanded as an acknowledgment of her inferiority. It was well known to Henry and his counsellors that the slightest whisper of such claims would have been met with instant re-

jection, and a proclamation of defiance and war. The town and castle of Berwick, indeed, were given up to England; but it was only because they occupied a debatable ground, and were already possessed by the English, while their recovery would have cost Scotland more than they were worth, and had been always of uncertain tenure. One advantage, indeed, Henry had laboured to obtain in both treaties but ineffectually; this was, to detach the Scots from their old alliance with France, which was usually renewed upon the death of the king of either country. The King of England sounded the proposal gently and warily by representing that after the marriage and peace were established James would no longer stand in need of French assistance, and requesting that he would therefore suspend the renewal of the league, or at least delay it for some time; but James would promise nothing more than to allow a short interval until he should advise with Henry in a personal interview, or with his own counsellors. Even when the treaty of peace was ratified in the High Church of Glasgow between James and the English ambassadors, he refused to confirm it until the title of "King of France," which Henry VII., like his predecessors, had assumed, was struck out of the list of his royal designations.

All these impediments being thus surmounted there was no further cause for delay so dangerous to all marriages, but especially to those of sovereigns; and on this occasion Henry showed his eagerness for the union by sending his daughter Margaret to Scotland a few days earlier than the time appointed, while the gladness of his heart was manifested by such an unwonted fit of liberality, that Margaret departed from her royal house with a very numerous and splendid train. She was escorted by the Earl of Surrey, by whom she was afterwards made a widow, the Earl of Northumberland, Lord Dacre, the Archbishop of York, and the Bishop of Durham; and in this regal style she crossed the Border and arrived at Lamberton Kirk a little to the north of Berwick, at which place she was solemnly delivered by the Earl of Northumberland to the commissioners of the King of Scots according to the specifications of the treaty.

¹ Rymer, *Fœd.* xii. 793-798.

CHAPTER II.

REIGN OF JAMES IV.—CONCLUSION (1503-1513).

Style of the Princess Margaret's arrival into Scotland—Her first interviews with James IV.—Pageants that welcomed their arrival into Edinburgh—Their marriage—Rebellion in the northern isles—Its origin and causes—The rebellion suppressed—Justiciary courts established in the northern districts—Turbulent and lawless state of the Scottish borders—The Raid of Eskdale—The Borderers reduced to order—Royal progresses of James and his queen—Relations of Scotland with foreign courts—Political negotiations of James with the continental powers—Peaceful condition of the kingdom—Illustrative experiment of James on the public tranquillity and safety—His wasteful expenditure—His unsuccessful expedients to improve his finances—The empirical Abbot of Tongland—James's love of ship-building and cannon-founding—He builds the ship called the *Great Saint Michael*—Its dimensions and equipments—Naval reprisals of Andrew Barton on the Portuguese—His defeat and death at sea by the English—Commencement of quarrels between James and Henry VIII.—The old alliance drawn closer between Scotland and France—Attempts of James to reconcile the continental powers and promote a general peace—His negotiations for the purpose ineffectual—Symptoms of an approaching war between England and Scotland—Efficient state of the Scottish navy—Fantastic appeal of the Queen of France to James—He resolves in consequence to invade England—He sends an armament to the aid of France—Mismanagement of the expedition—James sends his herald with a defiance to Henry VIII. in France—Henry's reception of the missive and messenger—Lord Home's hostile inroad into England—His defeat at Milfield—Attempts made to dissuade James from invading England—The strange apparition in the church at Linlithgow—The midnight summons at the cross of Edinburgh—March of James into England—His injudicious commencement of the campaign—His waste of time in criminal pleasures—Advance of the Earl of Surrey against him—Rash compliance of James with the earl's challenge—Obstinacy of James to the remonstrances of his counsellors—Surrey's able manœuvres to obtain a favourable position—Arrangement of the opposing armies at Flodden—Battle of Flodden—Its eventful changes—James slain in the battle—Destructive slaughter among the Scottish noble families—Character of James IV.

Such an event as his own marriage, which afforded so much scope for chivalrous games and gay festivals, was not likely to be neglected by such a king as James IV. It was also a season of peace and prosperity, while the character of the youthful sovereign had drawn to him the affections of every class of his subjects, so that nobles and commons vied among themselves, and with each other, to give lustre to the event. Never, therefore, had Scotland witnessed a royal marriage so cordially welcomed, or so splendidly celebrated. Moreover, it fortunately happens, that upon this event we are more fully and minutely informed than upon any other contemporaneous incident, as two English heralds who accompanied the princess into Scotland were careful to chronicle the proceedings, not only of every day but almost every hour, until they returned to their own country, while they describe every circumstance, however trivial, down to the congé of a salute, or the embroidery upon the hem of a garment. Upon such a gay and full account we may therefore be justified in lingering for more than the usual period of such royal unions, especially as this reign was closed by so dark and disastrous a termination.

The marriage itself was popular throughout England from the promise of peace which it afforded; it freed the kingdom from a troublesome neighbour against whom its attempts for

centuries had been worse than ineffectual, and put an end to a war of which the wisest in either country had bitterly regretted the commencement. The progress of the Princess Margaret through England was therefore a long triumphal march, signalized by welcomes, shows, and processions at every place where she halted on her way to the Scottish Border. Her train had also swelled as she proceeded, so that when she passed from Berwick to Lamberton Kirk, its number amounted to nearly two thousand horse. Here she was received on the part of the King of Scots by the Archbishop of Glasgow and the Earl of Bothwell at the head of a brilliant procession of lords, knights, gentlemen, and their attendants to the number of a thousand men, half of whom were mounted "on horses of great price and well appointed," the riders being clothed in jackets of velvet, of damask, and of camlet, while the royal trumpeters sounded a loud welcome upon their clarions to Margaret's arrival into her future home and kingdom. Her pavilions were pitched at Lamberton Kirk, and here she had in waiting a throng of dames and damosels of Scotland, whom James had appointed to attend her, and who were dressed in the best costume of the country, at the form and fancy of which the English ladies and the heralds appear to have marvelled greatly. Being now upon Scottish ground, and safely rendered

into her husband's keeping; the greater part of Margaret's train now took their leave and recrossed the Border. Travelling by easy stages the princess went on to Haddington, and afterwards took up her abode in the castle of Dalkeith, which was her appointed resting-place previous to her public entrance into Edinburgh as Queen of Scotland. In these Scottish journeyings a curious proof was given of the imperfection as yet of the approaches to the capital itself, and the politeness with which the difficulties of the journey had been abated. Scotland had few highways, or even tolerable roads; and paths had been hastily constructed by which Margaret and her train might travel, without being lost among trackless heaths or swamped in the mire.

Enough had now been done in the preliminaries of state ceremonial, and it was time that the hero himself should appear upon the scene. James accordingly visited his bride at Dalkeith, accompanied with a train of sixty horse. In his appearance on this, as on other occasions, the dress he wore and the ornaments with which it was set off are minutely described, from the tip of his feather to his spur-rowel, by these faithful English heralds, to whom every tag or button was of high national importance; but we may mention in general, that James was arrayed at this, his first visit, in a jacket of cramosie velvet bordered with cloth of gold; that his hawk's lure was dangling at his back; and that his beard was somewhat long—a point upon which these recorders are somewhat sensitive throughout, finding, perhaps, that the said royal beard was not exactly trimmed according to the standard of the English court. But his demeanour during the courtship, where the bride was already won, was the perfection of stately courtesy combined with a lover's delicate tenderness—a sort of grandiose obsequiousness and formal dignity, blended with the gay, graceful, impetuous ardour of a paladin of Charlemagne, or a knight of the court of King Arthur. There was no lack of affectionate endearment on both sides; and after supper, with abundance of minstrelsy and dancing, James returned well pleased to Edinburgh. The second visit was with less formality. The Archbishops of York and Glasgow, the Bishop of Durham, and the Earls of Surrey and Bothwell had gone out from Dalkeith to meet him midway; but, instead of encumbering himself with such a train, "the king flying as the bird that seeks her prey, took other ways, and came privately to the said castle, and entered within the chamber with small company, and found the said queen playing at the cards." The abruptness of this royal

onslaught only increased the fervour with which he was welcomed, and the zest of the pastimes with which he was regaled; dances were alternated with refreshments, where the king himself waited on Margaret with wine and bread; and the singing of ballads followed, in which the Scots and English contended for the palm of minstrelsy almost as ardently as for the prize of valour. James was delighted with his entertainment, and on departing, he vaulted gaily on his steed, and went off at full gallop in school-boy glee, "follow who might." On the following day, the visit was repeated at the early hour of supper, but the queen, who had been made aware of his coming, received him with ample preparation, and regaled him with her musical accomplishments, first on the clarichord and afterwards on the lute, while James listened bare-headed, and on bended knee. After supper, a fair steed, the present of Henry VII. to his son-in-law was brought out; it was draped with cloth of white and green damask that trailed to the ground, having hanging buttons or tassels of silk, the harness of the bridle being of velvet of the same colours. At the next return of the king, he was attended by a train of forty horse, but was himself mounted on a mule.

After a week spent in such daily visits, the time had come for Margaret's public entry into Edinburgh; and accordingly she left Dalkeith, attended by her train that glittered in crimson and cloth of gold and ermine. She was borne in a litter; and we are carefully told that she was habited in a gown of cloth of gold, with a purfle of black velvet; that she wore on her neck a rich collar of pearls and precious stones, and that her palfrey of honour was led after her by a knight. Midway between Dalkeith and Edinburgh, she was met by the king, "running as he would run after the hare," followed by his train as splendidly attired and bejewelled as that of the queen. And here, as in every other instance, the king's dress was minutely noted by the English heralds, so that he stands before the eye of the present generation almost as vividly as he did while he lived more than three centuries ago. His jacket was of purple velvet, trimmed with black fur; his doublet of violet satin, and his hose of scarlet; the collar of his shirt was adorned with pearls, and on his heels were a pair of long gilt spurs. The sword of state which was borne before him on such a public occasion as the present was carried by the Earl of Bothwell, who was attired in a long gown of black velvet trimmed with the fur of martins. The sword itself was in a scabbard of purple velvet, which was garnished with the motto, "God my Defender," made of pearls. The horse which James had provided for the

queen to make her entrance into Edinburgh was then brought forward; and as it was intended that she should ride on the crupper behind him, the animal was first tried by the king himself backing it, and afterwards taking up a gentleman behind him, to ascertain its docility, and that it would carry double. Margaret was then raised on the pillion behind him, and in this loving, homely fashion, which was not unusual among royal personages of the period, and even to a later time, the noble pair commenced their stately public progress. They had not rode far, however, when in passing through a field they found in it a fair pavilion, out of which sallied a knight armed at all points to join a lady who stood at the entrance; his path was crossed by another knight, who attempted to carry off the lady by violence; a sharp dialogue and challenge to mortal combat ensued, and the two warriors first rode a career of lances and afterwards fought on foot with their swords, until James, as umpire, put a stop to the encounter. These doughty champions who thus fought in seeming earnest, and were not scrupulous in dealing heavy strokes, were Sir Patrick Hamilton, the king's cousin, and Patrick Sinclair, an esquire. After this divertisement of arms another of hunting succeeded, the king having brought with him a hart for the purpose, which was let loose, while a greyhound was slipped in pursuit; but both hart and hound, instead of taking to the hills, where they might have afforded noble sport, and been kept long in view, dashed off to the neighbouring town of Edinburgh against all the rules and calculations of venery, and quickly disappeared among the suburbs. Nothing remained for the royal procession but to follow these *avant couriers*, and accordingly, they proceeded on their short journey without further delay.

The pageants that followed on their entrance into Edinburgh were so numerous, and so full of noise, pomp, and glitter, that we can only bestow a passing allusion upon the chief of them. Never had the poor and diminutive Scottish capital, so often destroyed and rebuilt, been so commoved from its inmost centre, and so adorned and beautified, as upon this joyous national occasion. "The said town of Edinburgh" (thus testify the English heralds) was in many places hanged with tapestry, the houses and windows so full of lords, ladies, gentlewomen, and gentlemen, and in the streets so great multitude of people without number, that it was a fair thing to see, the which people was very glad of the coming of the said queen, and in the suburbs of the said town bells rang for mirth." Descending to particulars, these deep-breathed heralds, accustomed though they

were to such professional details, almost exhaust themselves in describing the processions which met them at almost every step to do honour to the beloved sovereign of the land, and give welcome to his noble bride. There were the city minstrels with their harping and piping—the prelates in their imposing robes, and showering priestly benedictions—the different orders of friars bearing their sacred relics, which they presented to the royal pair to kiss—the high officials of the palace and the kingdom, adorned with the insignia of their office—lords and knights, and barons in such abundance, and with such high-sounding titles, that the strangers must have marvelled how a kingdom like Scotland could produce or sustain such an amount of nobility. And as all this show would have been incomplete and unsatisfactory without public dramatic pageantries the narrow streets of Edinburgh had been furbished for the occasion, and adorned with such temporary structures of wood, painted canvas, and plaster as might have vied with the best exhibitions of London or Paris. Thus, there was a triumphal arch of painted timber, having turrets and windows, at which were angels singing joyously to welcome the pair; and as the procession wound through it these celestial civic guardians presented to the queen the keys of the city. Nigh the cross, which was newly painted for the nonce, was a fountain which ran with good wine for all who pleased to drink. At the same central part of the city a scaffold was erected, on which two plays were exhibited, the subjects of which were, "The Judgment of Paris," and the "Angel Gabriel's Salutation to the Virgin!" But even in such a union the taste of this age could see no incongruity. There was also a triumphal arch hard by, superintended by four allegorical personages who represented the four cardinal virtues. The marriage feast and the queen's coronation, in which the climax of all this splendour and rejoicing was wound up, may for the present be omitted, as belonging to a different department of our history. It may be thought, indeed, that we have already lingered too long upon the subject, but let it be remembered that this marriage brought out in their fullest display the wealth, the civilization, and the general condition of Scotland in the earlier part of the sixteenth century. But far more important was the fact, that this marriage was ultimately to unite the rival and contending kingdoms into one, and form of them a single empire upon whose dominions the sun should not set. And yet there was an ominous shadow flitting throughout this sunshine, although the eye could not yet detect it, which in a few years

more was to throw over the Kingdom of Scotland a darkness that might be felt, and a midnight cry for the death of its first-born. Among these revellers was the brave, gallant Earl of Surrey in attendance upon Margaret; and joined with him was his brother, the admiral, and Sir Edward Stanley—the English heroes of Flodden. Little did they anticipate the time when that courteous, high-spirited, debonair king, whom they admired as the most accomplished of sovereigns and the kindest of hosts, would be dragged at their bidding from among a heap of carnage, and when they would be unable, in the mangled, hoof-trodden carcass that lay before them, to ascertain whether this was indeed the body of James IV., the soul and centre of such a happy national festival.

These marriage solemnities and pageants had not long been ended when the public tranquillity and the peace of James was disturbed by rebellion in the north. The commotion originated in the Isles, where a reluctant and doubtful obedience to the Scottish crown had for centuries been alternated by rebellion, and where the continuing barbarity of the people was encouraged, rather than suppressed, by the means that were adopted to reduce them to law and order. In 1476 the dangerous power of these descendants of the old sea-kings and Norse pirates had been greatly diminished by the annexation of the earldom of Ross to the crown; and though John, Lord of the Isles, had entered into a dangerous connection with England for the recovery of the earldom, he was allowed, during the weak reign of James III., to pursue his intrigues undisturbed. The case, however, was altered when James IV. had reached his majority; for he visited the Highlands and Isles in person, issued a sentence of forfeiture against John, and carried off as hostages the two principal island chiefs by whom these revolts had been promoted. Amidst the other acts of rough justice which were inflicted upon these fierce islesmen and their lords, the charters granted by the latter to the former during six years were revoked, and large portions of the territory belonging to the disaffected were bestowed upon royal favourites, and especially the Earl of Argyle, who was made lieutenant of the Isles, and invested with several of the privileges of their ancient lords. These measures were harsh and impolitic at least, if not unjust; the islesmen flew to arms, and having rescued Donald Dhu, an illegitimate grandson of John of the Isles, from imprisonment, where he had lain for forty years, they proclaimed him the lawful occupant of the island throne, with all its old possessions and immunities, and then proceeded to make good his claims by open and

fierce insurrection, in which they wasted Badenoch and set fire to the town of Inverness. But this wild outbreak only recoiled upon their own heads. An army was speedily raised under the command of the great northern earls and barons to proceed against the revolted, who were unable to make head against such a combination; and a parliament was assembled at Edinburgh on the 11th of March, 1503, to subdue the insurgents, and take orders for their future management. It is chiefly from the enactments of this parliament, rather than from the old historians, that the scanty particulars of this rebellion have been made known to us. In these it is stated that there had been great abuse of justice in the northern and western parts of the realm, particularly the northern and southern isles, for want of justice ayres, justices, and sheriffs, by which defect "the people are almost become savage;" and to remedy this defect, justice courts were henceforth to be held for the northern isles at Inverness or Dingwall, as the nature of the suit and condition of the parties might require; and that another justice or sheriff should be appointed for the southern isles and neighbouring territory, whose court upon every due occasion should be held in the Tarbet of Loch-Kilkerran. Those parts of the Highlands called Dowart and Glentowart, lying between Lorn and Badenoch, and the lordship of Lorn, all which places had been unaccustomed to acknowledge any courts of justice, were to attend these held at Perth, while those of Mawmor and Lochaber, which were equally destitute, were to belong to the court of Inverness, and a special judge was to be resident there for Argyle. In this manner it was attempted to establish regular courts in those lawless districts which had been wont to reject the ambulatory justice ayres or hold them in defiance. That part of Cowal not comprehended in Argyle was to be included under the court held at Dumbarton; and the inhabitants of Knapdale and Kintyre, joined with those of Bute, Arran, and the Cumbraes, were to wait upon the courts held at Ayr or Rothesay. New sheriffs were appointed for Ross and Caithness, hitherto comprised in the sheriffdom of Inverness, of which one was to hold his court in Tain or Dingwall, and the other at Dornoch or Wick. In all these districts also, whether of mainland or isles, whether Celtic or Norwegian in their population and usages, the people were to be ruled by no other than the ordinances and common law of the realm.¹

Such were the parliamentary enactments of 1503 for the legislation of the Highlands and

¹ *Acts of the Parliaments of Scotland*, ii. pp. 239, 249.

Isles. But before these wholesome decrees could be put in use it was necessary to quell the rebellion and disarm the prevalent lawlessness by force and bloodshed. It was fortunate that both the king and his father, especially the former, had bestowed such attention upon their navy; for though a considerable army was in readiness under the Earl of Arran, the king's lieutenant, the rebels could only be reached in their strongholds by the co-operation of a fleet with the land-forces. This difficulty was easily got over through the ships of war that accompanied the expedition, under the command of the two great naval commanders, Sir Andrew Wood and Robert Barton. The castles built upon the coasts, and hitherto deemed impregnable, were obliged to yield to the new and decisive language of the floating batteries, and the island chiefs perceiving the uselessness of resistance were fain to come to terms and be obedient to the royal authority.¹

Another troublesome part of the kingdom that needed the imposition of law and order fully as much as the Isles was the Scottish borders, whose inhabitants lived by war and plunder, and recognized no authority but that of their own marauding leaders. As it was in vain to expect the maintenance of the late peace as long as these wild clans were unsuppressed, James secured the co-operation of Henry for the purpose of quelling them, and set out upon an expedition to the Border, attended not only by men-at-arms, judges, and executioners, but also by huntsmen, falconers, and morris-dancers, so that the trials of war and justice might be alternated and relieved by the pleasures of the chase and festival. At Lochmaben in Dumfriesshire, where he pitched his encampment, he was met by Lord Dacre, the warden of the English border; and between these two a vigorous hunt was instituted, in which the Scottish borderers, prevented from escaping beyond their own pale, were inclosed by the royal troops, and the chief malefactors brought in for trial and execution that was conducted by a very summary process. By this "Raid of Eskdale," as it was called, the quiet of the Borders was secured for a few years—the utmost that could be obtained among such lawless and desperate communities even by the most vigorous measures. Having thus restored the more remote and dangerous parts of his kingdom to order James was equally indefatigable in superintending those districts which were nigher the seat of government; and the Raid of Eskdale was followed by a justiciary expedition beyond the Mounth, in which he proceeded as far as

Forres.² Nor were these journeys through dreary districts, and for such stern purposes, altogether so cheerless and thankless as they might have been, so that after his marriage James had sometimes his royal partner for his fellow-traveller. The following short account of the Bishop of Ross will show how they fared in their progresses:—"The king and queen, all the rest of this year, passed through the principal towns in the south parts of the realm and abbey places, where great entertainment was made to them, and sundry goodly propines and gifts were given to the queen in token of blytheness; for the use observed in Scotland was at that time, as it was many years before, that the king, the queen, and their train travelled for the most part of the year through the realm, and lodged in the abbey palaces or with the bishops and prelates, where they were well entertained certain days, and at their departing the bishop or abbot, master of the place, gave a purse to the king and another to the queen, with certain quantity of gold contained therein, which extended yearly to a great sum."

The events which succeeded for some years were of a gratifying character, as they showed that Scotland, now at peace with herself and her powerful neighbour, had a greater influence in foreign affairs than she had hitherto possessed. Louis XII. of France, while employed in his wars against Milan and Naples, had paid little attention of late to Scotland, as a kingdom too remote to aid him in his military operations; and therefore the close alliance of James with England, which at any other period would have been interrupted by French intrigues and counter-proposals, had been successfully effected without their interference. But now the case was different. The kingdom of Naples, which had been conquered and divided as a spoil between France and Spain, became a subject of quarrel between these ambitious occupants; and in the war that ensued between them the French in 1503 were defeated, and Naples became the prize of the victor. As Henry VII. was closely allied to Spain by the marriage, first of his eldest son Arthur and afterwards of his second son Henry, to the Infanta Catherine, Louis had good cause to be apprehensive of a war with England as well as Spain; and in the possibility of such an event he judged it well to resume those amicable relations with the Scots, of which France in former times had so effectually reaped the benefit. An ambassador was therefore sent from the French court to Scotland; and the person chosen to represent the French king was

¹ Treasurer's accounts, A.D. 1504.

² Treasurer's accounts, A.D. 1504.

one well fitted to conciliate the Scots, for it was no other than Bernard Stuart, Lord Aubigny, the kinsman of their own sovereign, who had been ambassador to Scotland in 1484, and who had since become renowned as a brave, skilful warrior. This second arrival in Scotland of Lord Aubigny appears to have been in 1504, but the nature of his negotiations has not been mentioned, and can only be surmised from the state of affairs in England and upon the Continent. James received him with the distinction and cordiality which so near a relative and so renowned a hero merited, instituting tournaments in his honour, appealing to him as a supreme authority on all matters of chivalry, and addressing him by the title of Father of War.¹ Although this favour had an ominous aspect to the alliance between Scotland and England, it did not, however, for the present interrupt it; on the contrary, James, in 1505, interposed his good offices with his kinsman and ally, the Duke of Gueldres, to dissuade the duke from giving refuge to William de la Pole, Earl of Suffolk, who had raised a rebellion against Henry VII., and who made pretensions to the English crown as nephew of Henry IV. and male head of the Yorkists. His application was successful, and Suffolk was dismissed from Gueldres. Soon after this the mediation of James was employed in behalf of the Duke of Gueldres himself, who was maintaining an unequal contest against the Emperor Maximilian, to whom the King of England had promised aid in effecting the duke's deposition. James by his remonstrances persuaded his father-in-law to desist, and at the same time obtained the interposition of the French king, by which Maximilian was obliged to abandon his designs upon Gueldres.²

Independently of these negotiations, which show the influence of Scotland in the politics of Europe, we have notices of other political movements to the same effect, although from their peaceful character and silent operations they are passed over in the records of the period as matters of inferior moment. They were connected not only with France but the northern states of Denmark, Sweden, and Norway; for Scotland now ranked high as a naval power, and could make her influence be felt in quarters with which she had hitherto maintained only an occasional intercourse. On one occasion, indeed, an insult was offered to her sea-flag, which was followed by a swift and terrible chastisement. Incensed at the alliance of James with the Duke of Gueldres and the effectual aid which he had rendered to that over-matched

territory, the Flemings and Hollanders, who were at this time the subjects of Maximilian, plundered certain Scottish ships and threw their merchants and crews into the sea to escape detection. But this atrocity was soon discovered; and James, without troubling himself to remonstrate about such a notorious act of piracy, commissioned Barton to inflict punishment upon the perpetrators. This bold seaman set sail in a large ship of war and executed his commission so strictly that the heads of the offenders were sent to James in casks, and Barton returned to Scotland enriched with their spoils.³

Another embassy from a peaceful quarter, although its purposes were warlike, arrived in Scotland in 1507. The pontiff, Julius II., indignant that Italy should become the battlefield of France and Spain, and desirous to drive these ultramontanes across the Alps and Pyrenees, had resolved to begin with the French, who at present held the ascendancy. He was desirous that James should desert his alliance with France in favour of one with Maximilian and the Venetians, and he backed his application with the gifts of a consecrated hat and sword. The papal ambassador was received with every token of reverence, although his appeals were ineffectual; instead of dissolving his alliance with France, James offered to send to Louis an auxiliary force of four thousand Scots to aid him in his Italian wars, and especially for the recovery of Genoa. But this fair city having surrendered to Louis, made the proposed expedition from Scotland unnecessary.⁴

Amidst these complications of embassies and overtures in which Scotland was successively courted by the principal European powers, it is gratifying to note the unwonted peacefulness which prevailed through the whole country, and the security that was extended over life and property. Of this James was justly so proud that he resolved to illustrate it by a daring experiment. Without a single attendant, and probably disguised as an ordinary man, he rode all alone from Stirling by Perth and Aberdeen to Elgin, thus accomplishing in one day a ride of about an hundred and thirty miles, through rough ways and wild districts, without encountering molestation or danger. After this wonderful feat of horsemanship and test of the security of travelling in Scotland he took rest for a few hours upon a hard board, and on the morning pushed onward to the shrine of St. Duthac, in Ross, where he heard mass—thus combining the merits of a pilgrimage with the stir and excite-

¹ Pitscottie.² *Epist. Reg. Scot.* vol. i. pp. 21-34.³ *Epist. Reg. Scot.*, vol. i. pp. 21-34.⁴ *Ibid.* 83, 87.

ment of adventure—and returned to Stirling accompanied by the nobility of the districts through which he passed.¹ After his return to court James resumed those chivalrous sports and pageantries to which he was so inordinately addicted; and tournaments were held at which the venerable Aubigney, the Father of War, presided as umpire, while the king himself took part in the encounters, sometimes in the character of a “salvage knight” roaming in quest of adventures, sometimes as King Arthur, while his companions personated the famous Knights of the Round Table. Another passion of James was for fine horses, and to procure choice breeds of them he was neither deterred by expense nor distance. He applied, therefore, not only to Flanders but to Spain and Poland; and the presents of this kind which he received from foreign courts he requited with those hardy ponies called Galloways, and the kind of hunting-dogs for which Scotland was particularly famous.² These expenses bore hard upon his scanty exchequer; but, unwilling to abate them and become less in the eyes of the world, James often talked moodily of leaving the kingdom and repairing as a pilgrim to the Holy Land. To this, perhaps, the acts of penance with which he alternated his gay revelries and adventures may have inclined him, for he was wont during his whole lifetime to hurry from scenes of reckless dissipation into the most ascetic practices of self-mortification and devotion. The greatness of his expenditure at one time seems to have tempted him to have recourse to those extortionate practices by which Henry VII. had become one of the richest sovereigns of Europe; and he proceeded to examine with a calculating eye the old feudal rights of the Scottish kings to the proceeds of estates, held of the crown during the minority of heirs, and other such privileges, from which his predecessors had been wont to derive a large portion of their revenues. These he attempted to revive, but the imposts had become so obsolete and the persons liable to their infliction were so numerous that he wisely abandoned such an unjust and dangerous attempt.³ A wiser plan which he adopted was to explore the mines of Scotland for the purpose of laying open their hidden treasures of metals or minerals; but though a commencement was thus made, there was not as yet sufficient science in the country to turn the research to a profitable account. It would have been strange if, amidst his urgent necessities and his search after gold, James had been proof to the delusions of alchemy and the

offers of empirics to multiply the precious metals to an indefinite amount. One of these had found his way from Italy to Scotland; and James, with whom he became a favourite, made him Abbot of Tongland. “He caused the king believe,” says Bishop Lesley, “that he by multiplying, and others his inventions, would make fine gold of other metal, whilk science he called the Quintessence; whereupon the king made great cost, but all in vain.” To support his credit as well as trusting in the efficacy of his experiment, this foreign adept also pretended to possess the secret of the art of flying; and as James was about to send an embassy to France, he promised that he would fly thither upon a pair of wings before the ambassadors could reach the country. To work he set accordingly; and having constructed his pinions and fastened them to his shoulders he waved them in confidence upon the top of the castle-wall of Stirling and sprang forward, but only to fall to the ground and break his leg. Even then, however, not the attempt itself but the structure of the wings was in fault; for he asserted that hens’ feathers had been introduced in their fabrication, which feathers yearn for the dunghill instead of mounting to the sky. “In thus doing,” adds the bishop humorously, “he pressed to counterfoot ane king of England called Bladud, who, as their histories mention, decked himself in feathers and presumed to fly in the air as he did; but, falling on the temple of Apollo, brake his neck.”

A more important pursuit of James was that of ship-building, at which, to encourage his subjects as well as gratify his tastes, he worked with his own hands. His desire was evidently to make Scotland a maritime and trading country, through which alone it could become rich and prosperous. But here also his love of the grand and marvellous sometimes predominated over the useful and practical, so that his chief effort was devoted to the construction of a gigantic but unmanageable hulk rather than a fleet of ordinary vessels. This ship, called the *Great Saint Michael*, is thus described at length by Pitscottie, whose account is too valuable to be curtailed. “This ship was of so great stature and took so much timber that except Falkland she wasted all the woods in Fife, which was oak-wood, by [besides] all timber that was gotten out of Norway. For she was so strong and of so great length and breadth (all the wrights of Scotland, yea, and many other strangers, were at her device, by the king’s commandment, who wrought very busily in her; but it was year and day ere she was complete), to wit, she was twelvescore foot of length, and thirty-six foot within the sides. She was ten

¹ Lesley, pp. 75, 76.

² *Epist. Reg. Scot.*; Lesley.

³ Lesley, p. 73.

foot thick in the wall, outed jests of oak in her wall, and boards on every side, so stark and so thick that no cannon could go through her. This great ship cumbered Scotland to get her to the sea. From that time that she was afloat and her masts and sails complete, with tows and anchors effeiring there to, she was counted to the king to be thirty thousand pounds of expenses, by [besides] her artillery, which was very great and costly to the king, by all the rest of her orders; to wit, she bore many cannons, six on every side, with three great basils, two behind in her dock and one before, with three hundred shot of small artillery, that is to say, myand and battert-falcon and quarter-falcon, slings, pestilent serpentins, and double dogs, with hagter and culverin, cross-bows, and hand-bows. She had three hundred mariners to sail her; she had sixscore of gunners to use her artillery, and had a thousand men of war, by [besides] her captains, skippers, and quarter-masters. When this ship passed to the sea and was lying in the road the king caused shoot a cannon at her to assay her if she was wight, but I heard say it deared [pierced] her not and did her little scathe. And if any man believe that this description of the ship be not of verity as we have written, let him pass to the gate of Tullibardine, and there, afore the same, ye will see the length and breadth of her planted with hawthorn by the wright that helped to make her. As for other properties of her, Sir Andrew Wood is my author, who was quarter-master of her, and Robert Barton, who was master-skipper." Thus the ship was of great length as compared with its breadth, but such was now the plan upon which ships were constructed that were intended exclusively for war. When we find that it had only fifteen cannon, we must keep in mind the huge calibre and weight of the artillery of the period as well as the smaller guns or patereroes with which she was so liberally furnished. The passion of James for ship-building was accompanied with great attention to gunnery, an art as yet in its infancy throughout Europe at large, and which had not superseded the practices and weapons of ancient warfare that were in use before gunpowder was known. He had therefore a complete gunner, called Robert Borthwick, in his service, who was employed in casting cannons and fortifying the castle of Edinburgh. The pieces so constructed were distinguished by the inscription upon them,—

"Machina sum Scoto Borthuik fabricata Roberto,
Jacobus Quarto rege, jubente pio."¹

These preparations indicated the honourable ambition of James not only to strengthen his impoverished kingdom and raise it to an equality with other nations, but it was also a symptom of the overclouding of the political horizon and his apprehension that the unwonted state of peace which had continued during his reign could not be maintained much longer. And, indeed, there was cause for such an apprehension. With scarcely any interruption he had lived in amicable intercourse with Henry VII., his father-in-law; but that peaceful and politic king died in 1509, and was succeeded by his son, Henry VIII., a king only in his eighteenth year, who already gave indications of that proud imperious spirit which in after years embroiled him with every sovereign of Europe in turn. The first preparations of the new reign in England pointed to a war with France, in which Henry, elated by the flattery of his young courtiers, was to equal or even outdo the glories of Cressy and Agincourt; and in such a conflict it was certain that Scotland would not be allowed to remain neutral. A gift also which arrived to James about this time indicated the apprehensions of France of a coming war with England and the part which the King of Scots was expected to take in it. It was two great ships "laden with guns, spears, and all kinds of munition."²

In this state of affairs between England and Scotland several circumstances occurred to loosen the perpetual peace that had been established at the time of James's marriage between the two kingdoms and restore the old feelings of national rancour. In consequence of an injury inflicted by the Portuguese thirty years earlier upon the father of the Bartons, his three sons Andrew, Robert, and John had obtained letters of marque from their sovereign to inflict vengeance and exact satisfaction. Portugal had now become one of the greatest of maritime powers, and the wealth of India, which she had conquered, was at her command; but these formidable advantages were only additional inducements to the bold brothers, whose nautical skill and daring were not surpassed by any seamen of that adventurous age. They fitted out a squadron which was soon manned by congenial spirits, and in their cruises they more than indemnified themselves upon the rich carracks returning from India and Africa to Portugal. Besides this wealth they imported into Scotland such spoils of their conquests as were new to the wondering eyes of the Scots, and among these are particularized sundry negro and Indian captives, who formed brave

¹ Lesley, p. 81.

² Lesley, p. 80.

additions to the masques and pageants of the gay court of King James. But the Bartons were accused of not having confined themselves exclusively to Portuguese ships; and it was alleged, that in the Western Ocean they had stopped and searched English vessels under the pretext that they contained Portuguese goods. Such were especially the charges brought against Andrew Barton, who traversed the English seas, and was represented as a pirate who used his letters of marque for a pretext and plundered all ships alike. On hearing these reports the Earl of Surrey is declared to have vowed that this Scot should not infest the narrow seas as long as he had an estate to furnish a ship, or a son who could command it. He fitted out two strong ships of war, of which he appointed his sons, Lord Thomas Howard and Sir Edward Howard, afterwards lord-high-admiral of England, to be commanders; and on setting out to sea they were so fortunate as to find their enemy in the Downs on his return from a cruise upon the coast of Portugal. Barton had his own ship, the *Lion*, and an armed pinnace called the *Jenny Pirwen*; but, in addition to his inferiority of force, his ships were probably laden with plunder, and therefore the less fitted either to give battle or avoid it. It is also added that the Howards showed friendly signals, to throw him off his guard and draw him unprepared within their reach. The battle that followed was maintained by the Scots with great hardihood; and though their gallant admiral was mortally wounded he continued to animate them by sounding his whistle of gold, the badge of his high office, as long as he had breath to blow it. His ships were boarded and carried into the Thames, and to add to the irregularity of the proceeding on the part of England, they were condemned as lawful prizes, while their crews were sent home after a short imprisonment. Indeed, Barton's ship, the *Lion*, was so choice an addition to the still very imperfect English navy, that next to the *Great Harry*, it was the largest of all their vessels of war.¹ This breach of the established peace between the two kingdoms, accompanied with the death of his admiral and the capture of his ships, was indignantly resented by James, who sent a herald to the English court to demand satisfaction for the injury; but Henry arrogantly replied that Barton being a pirate, his death ought to make no breach of their amity and alliance; and that, nevertheless, he would send commissioners to the Borders to treat upon that and all other alleged offences.

This aggression was not the only ground of

offence which existed about this time between the two countries. Sir Robert Ker, a favourite of James, and officer of the royal household, who was also master of artillery and warden of the Middle Marches, had exercised his office of wardenship with a strictness or severity that was displeasing to the lawless Borderers of England; and in consequence of this he was attacked and murdered by Lilburn, Starhead, and Heron, three subjects of Henry VII., who was then reigning. The English king surrendered Lilburn, and afterwards a brother of Heron into the hands of James, who threw them into prison in Fastcastle, where Lilburn died. On the accession of Henry VIII. Heron and Starhead, the two other murderers, emerged from their hiding-places, in the hope that under the new reign their crime would be overlooked. But they could not escape the sharp eye of feudal hatred and Border vengeance. While they ruffled in public and endeavoured to excite fresh commotions Andrew Ker, the son of Sir Robert, sent two of his retainers to Starhead's residence, although it was ninety miles from the Border; and these staunch bloodhounds murdered the man in his own dwelling, and conveyed his head to their master, who exposed it in one of the most public places of Edinburgh, as the head of a man who had been executed by a righteous doom.² Such a deed could scarcely be committed by Ker without the connivance or tacit consent of his sovereign, and Henry would naturally resent it as an insult offered to himself. In another circumstance James had equal cause to complain of his brother of England. By his will Henry VII. had bequeathed to his daughter Margaret a valuable store of jewels; but these Henry VIII. had hitherto failed to deliver, although application had been made to that effect. To add to his meanness he demanded a heavy price for the restitution of these goods, which was nothing less than that James should either abandon all alliance with France or at least remain neutral in the approaching war between that country and England—that he should “sit still in his chair” and look on, while he and the King of France were employed in the encounter. James rejected the unkingly proposal with scorn, and declared that he would himself pay the value of the bequest to his queen, while Margaret, in writing to her brother, desired him to speak no further of it, as her bountiful husband would make her full satisfaction.³

At the present period France could scarcely afford to lose such a brave and useful ally as

² Buchanan, xiii. 26.

³ Pitscottie, 108. This writer erroneously states the bequest to have been made by Margaret's brother Arthur instead of her father.

¹ Lesley, pp. 82, 83; Old English ballad in Percy Relics.

Scotland; for against that country were now combined the pope, the emperor, and the King of Spain, with Henry of England, whom the pontiff had flattered with the title of head of the Italian League. Henry had already declared war in form, and was impatient for the glories of a French invasion; but before he could safely depart on such an enterprise it was necessary for him to secure the good-will and forbearance of Scotland, so that no invasion of his kingdom should occur while he was absent on the Continent. In consequence of the important position held at such a crisis by the hitherto neglected country, the Scottish court was distinguished by embassies from the pope, from Spain, from France, from England—from all the banded or antagonistic parties to whom the alliance or neutrality of Scotland could be of any importance. The proposal of the King of England was for mutual amity and forbearance for the time to come, accompanied with expressions of regret for past injuries and offences; but James, who rated this tardy offer at what it was worth, refused to close with it. The application of La Motte, the French ambassador, was more successful. James not only ratified the old league with France, which had only reference to the wars of that country with England, but added a new clause that comprised its present enemies all and whatsoever, which included not only England, France, Spain, and the pope, but the Netherlands, Venice, and Switzerland. It was a large and perilous pledge, and if fulfilled to the letter, would task the uttermost of his resources both by land and sea. But in such distant conflicts his young navy could now count for something even among the great maritime states of Europe, and a reinforcement of Scottish ships in such a war would be of as much importance as an auxiliary band of Scottish spearmen. James, too, was probably urged by his necessities for money, which France was both able and willing to supply; and when La Motte landed at Blackness in 1512, he brought with him a large ship laden with artillery, gunpowder, and wine, a present from the French king, which was doubtless either the accompaniment or the prelude of a comfortable money subsidy. But before committing himself by action, and hoping that a blow had not yet been struck, James endeavoured to mediate between France and the parties leagued against her. For this purpose he sent his uncle, the Duke of Albany, now in high favour at the French court, as his ambassador-extraordinary to the Emperor Ferdinand to request his good offices for the restoration of peace between Louis of France and Pope Julius II. He sent his able and wily negotiator, Andrew Forman,

Bishop of Moray, to recommend peaceful measures to the college of cardinals and the Marquis of Mantua, and also to attempt a mediation between Louis and the pontiff. To the application of the emperor requesting him to join the papal league against France, James declared that his only wish was to preserve the peace of Christendom unbroken, and to this effect he sent an envoy to Denmark, with the court of which he still kept up friendly relations. But Julius, the representative of Christian peace upon earth and father of Christendom, was not likely to be moved from his warlike and ambitious purposes by a voice so remote as that of Scotland; in fact the hostilities of which he was the instigator had already commenced, of which those between France and England were to be but an episode; and James had no alternative according to the tenor of his compact with Louis, and the position in which he now stood with the two parties, except that of serving the French interests by a rupture with Henry his brother-in-law and an invasion of England. As a last effort in behalf of the peaceful relations between the two countries, which were now becoming every day more subject to infraction, James, in the beginning of the year 1513, sent Lord Drummond on an embassy to England, offering to Henry a gratuitous and full remission of all the injuries and damages suffered by the Scots through English aggressions, if he would forego his purposed invasion of France. But the hour for action had struck, and the King of England was not a man to pause or deliberate; the offer was rejected. Henry in turn made a last attempt to detach James from his French alliance by an offer of redress for all the injuries the Scots had suffered from his subjects at sea, provided a similar redress was afforded by the Scots to England; but it was observed at the same time, that according to equity, the English losses to be so refunded were of thrice the value of those that had been sustained by Scotland. It was evident that all this was nothing but derision and defiance; that nothing else than war must follow; and that each party might now gird itself for the conflict.¹

Even while this last negotiation was going on, in which Henry was evidently protracting time that his preparations might be completed for a French invasion, James was busy in his preparations for a war with England. His two principal resources for defence and aggression, to which he had so carefully attended during the long interval of peace, now occupied his chief solicitude, and he was daily inspecting the con-

¹ Letters of Lord Dacre and John Ainslaw to the Bishop of Durham; Letters of West to Henry VIII.

dition of the artillery at the castle of Edinburgh, and of his fleet at Newhaven and Leith. Of his shipping, indeed, he might justly be proud on account of the strength and importance into which it had grown under his more especial care, the able, experienced commanders who presided over it, and the success with which its enterprises had been crowned both over the Portuguese and English. Of this navy, according to the account transmitted to the English king by Lord Dacre, the Border warden, there were thirteen great ships at Leith, all having three tops, besides ten smaller vessels, and a ship captured from the English; and at Newhaven there were two great ships, the *Margaret* and the *James*, and a long vessel like a galley of thirty oars on each side, which was to serve as the pinnacle of the *Great Saint Michael*. Such a fleet united to that of France might have proved an over-match for that of England; but for the present it was inactive owing to the scantiness of James's finances, who had never at any period of his life been an economist. It would have been well, indeed, for himself and his kingdom if this fair fleet had been compelled to remain at anchor at Newhaven or until the appearance of the English navy in the Forth had called it out for the national defence. But that infatuation which is the sure prelude of destruction had already obtained the ascendancy. His enemy, Forman, the Bishop of Moray, in whom he trusted, and whom he had employed as his negotiator with the contending powers, had sought the promotion of his own interests instead of those of his confiding master; and all his arts were now employed in committing James to the cause of Louis, in consequence of the hope of a cardinal's hat which the French king had promised to obtain for him. Ships arrived from France and Denmark with munitions and provision for the Scottish shipping, as well as good store of golden crowns for the king and his needy counsellors. And that no incentive might be omitted, his fantastic devotedness to chivalry and zeal for knightly punctilio were invoked by a queen in the strain of a distressed errant damosel at the knees of an Amadis de Gaul, imploring deliverance from some anthropophagous giant or loathly for-ester, even as such applications are detailed in the old crazy tales of romance. Anna of Brittany, the wife of Louis, wrote to James a letter with her own fair hand as to her chosen knight and champion, telling him what rebuke she had suffered in France for his sake, and in defence of his honour and reputation, and imploring that in requital he would raise an army and march three feet of ground into England. To second this appeal she sent him a ring from her

own finger and fourteen thousand French crowns to aid in defraying the expenses of the expedition. Forman was at this time in France, and was no doubt the adviser of this appeal so suited to the weakness of the king. At the same time he wrote an urgent letter to his master, telling him that his honour was lost for ever unless he made an immediate diversion in favour of France, according to the promises which he (the bishop) had been commissioned to make in his name.¹

It was only from these urgent letters of the Queen of France and the Bishop of Moray that James learned with surprise and regret that a very important movement which he had already made in behalf of Louis had been unsuccessful. A short time previous to this he had embarked a land force of three thousand men on board of his fleet, and sent them to the aid of the French king. But, unfortunately, he had appointed as commander of the expedition the Earl of Arran; and this person, who seems to have been incompetent for such a charge, had the supreme authority over both troops and shipping. And yet not only Sir Andrew Wood, but two of the Bartons were still alive, and fit for active service. In the choice of Arran, who like the king himself was a very hero in tilts and tournaments, James already gave evidence of the insane romantic spirit in which the approaching war was to be conducted, and in which the national honour and safety were to be imperilled. The king himself superintended the embarkation, and accompanied the ships in the *Great Saint Michael* as far as the Isle of May; but at his departure the Earl of Arran, disregarding his orders to proceed direct to France, put about for Ireland, and stormed the town of Carrickfergus with all the ferocity of the old sea-kings, sparing neither age, nor sex, nor condition. Why such a gratuitous deed of cruelty was committed, and against a people with whom Scotland was at peace, has not been stated; and it may be supposed that either some personal feud or the greed of plunder had instigated the earl's attempt. So well was he satisfied also with his exploit, that instead of proceeding to execute his main commission, Arran returned to Scotland, and anchored off the town of Ayr. Indignant at this flagrant contradiction of his orders, James swore that the Earl of Arran should never brook heritage in Scotland after that day, and sent his herald to deprive him of his command, which he bestowed upon Sir Andrew Wood. But no sooner did tidings of these changes reach the earl, than without waiting for the king's orders or Wood's

¹ Pitscottie, p. 110.

arrival, "he pulled up sails, and passed where he pleased, thinking that he would come to France in due time."¹ Of the fate of a fleet so strangely commanded, little or nothing could be afterwards ascertained. It indeed reached France, but there it seems to have been silently broken up piecemeal after the death of James, some of the ships rotting in the harbour, others being purchased by the French government or private traders, and others returning in a shattered condition to Scotland, and at a time when naval enterprise and adventure had ceased to be of high account. In this way the sea-flag of Scotland which James IV. had raised and waved so triumphantly was stricken down along with the right arm that had so gallantly sustained it; and more than the defeat of Flodden itself, the nation had cause to regret the loss of such a navy on account of the wealth, the civilization, and the industrial spirit of which it was so fair a promise.

On the same day that his fleet sailed James despatched the lion king-at-arms to Henry, at that time in France, and employed in the siege of Terouen, with a letter which, under the form of a remonstrance, breathed war and defiance. It was an enumeration of all the grievances which both James and Scotland had sustained at the hands of the King of England, and which still remained unredressed. A safe-conduct had been refused to an envoy whom James was about to send to England. The commissioners at the Border who had been appointed to meet with those of Scotland for the redress of common grievances had been observant neither of justice, good faith, nor courtesy. The bastard Heron, the murderer of Sir Robert Ker, was still living at large in England, while Scottish offenders were carried across the Border into England, imprisoned, and chained by the neck. The legacy of her father to the Queen of Scotland, which Henry in his letters had repeatedly promised to pay, was still withheld. The murder of Andrew Barton accomplished by Henry's orders was still unredressed, and the ships and artillery taken on the occasion had not been restored. And last and worst of all, Henry had now made open war without provocation upon James's friends and allies, to wit, upon his kinsman the Duke of Gueldres, whose disinheritance the King of England had sought to effect, and upon the King of France, of whose loss of the Duchy of Milan he had been the cause, and whose kingdom he was invading. And then came the sum and purport of the letter, with a sharpness and distinctness that could not be misunderstood: "Therefore we

write to you at this time at length the plainness of our mind, that we require and desire you to desist from further invasion and utter destruction of our brother and cousin, the most high Christian king, to whom, by all consideration, blood, and alliance, and also by new bond which you have compelled us lately to take through your injuries and harms without remedy done daily unto us, our lieges and subjects, we are bound and obliged, for mutual defence each of the others, like as you and your confederates be obliged, for mutual invasions and actual war: Certifying you that we will take part in the defence of our brother and cousin, the most high Christian king, and will do what we trust may soonest cause you to desist from pursuit of him; and for denied or postponed justice to our lieges, we must give letters of marque, according to the amity betwixt you and us, whereto you have had little regard in time bygone; as we have ordained our herald, the bearer hereof, to say, if it like you to hear him, and give him credence. Right excellent, right high and mighty prince, our dearest brother and cousin, the Trinity have you in keeping."²

The Lion herald was marshalled into the royal presence by Garter, the chief herald of England, and found Henry surrounded by the chief nobles of his army. Having prefaced his message by courtly words, as was usual on such occasions, Lion delivered his missive, which the king first read to himself, and then imparted to his council. The proud king's rage flamed so hot and high at its tenor that, instead of the common courtesy of an answer in writing, he proposed to return a verbal reply. The offer was as informal as it was insulting, and Lion answered with dignity, "Sir, I am the natural subject of King James, my master, and he is my natural lord, and what he commands me to say, I may boldly say, with favour; but your letters, which you can send with honour, may declare your pleasure; albeit your answer requires doing and not writing, that is, that immediately you should return home." "I will return to my pleasure, to your damage," roared Henry, "and not at your master's summoning!" Lion then denounced war in form, but before he departed he received from the king a letter to his master in which the reproaches of James were repaid with usury.³ Having received his dismissal and a largesse of 100 angels, the Lion departed to return to Scotland by the way of Flanders; but before he ended his voyage the battle of Flodden had been fought, and his master slain.⁴

² Lesley, pp. 87, 88, 89, 90, 91.

³ The substance of this letter is given in Holinshed, *Reign of Henry VIII.*, A.D. 1513.

⁴ Lesley, p. 91.

¹ Pitscottie, p. 110.

From this war of words we pass to that of deeds, which even thus early had commenced upon the Scottish border. Foreseeing that an invasion into England was at hand, and remembering how profitable such adventures had been to the chief actors on whatever country the loss might fall, Lord Home, warden of the Scottish marches, was impatient to reap the first-fruits of the maturing harvest. Without waiting, therefore, till the proclamation of war was made, or obtaining the permission of his sovereign, whose movements he presumed to anticipate, he rushed at the head of three or four thousand followers into England, burned seven villages, and then returned homeward encumbered with cattle and plunder. But in this slow, careless march, he fell into an ambuscade that was laid for him by Sir William Balmer in the neighbourhood of Milfield. Balmer's force amounted only to a thousand men; but of these four hundred were archers who lay concealed in a field of tall broom, and who plied their shafts with such effect that five hundred Scots were killed upon the spot. Home disgracefully fled, leaving his banner behind him; his Borderers, who had nothing but plunder to lose, spurred off at the first onset, with as much of the prey as they could remove; and Sir George Home, the warden's brother, and four hundred men remained prisoners in the hands of the English.¹ It was an inglorious commencement of hostilities; and independently of its dispiriting prestige, it was a warning note to England to be in readiness for coming events. James could no longer delay hostilities, and he hastened the levies which for some time had been assembling upon the Borough Moor, in the neighbourhood of Edinburgh. The people of Scotland were generally averse to the war; but the king was so popular with all classes that nobles and burghers, Highlanders, Lowlanders, and Islesmen crowded rapidly to his standard. Not less than a hundred thousand men were assembled on the Borough Moor when the signal to march was expected. But of these how many must have been useless supernumeraries and camp followers! And of the real soldiery, how few could have seen active service! A Bruce or a Wallace would never have staked the fate of a kingdom on such a cast, but have trained them to actual warfare before such an issue was hazarded. But James had committed himself to his inordinate attachment to France and his own fantastic ideas of honour, and was pressing forward in the thought that pause or return was too late.

It was not to mere political or earthly con-

siderations alone that this reckless indifference of the King of Scotland was manifested; he would not have been persuaded though one had risen from the dead. A few days before he joined his army he went sad and thoughtful to Linlithgow. It was near the time, if not on the very day, of the anniversary of his father's murder. It was the town to which he and the rebel lords had repaired after the paricidal victory which had placed him on the throne. These recollections, independently of the dangers and doubtful issue of the enterprise in which he was embarked, were enough to inspire him with remorseful and foreboding thoughts; and as was his wont in such gloomy seasons, he had thrown aside his habitual gaiety and betaken himself to penitential devotion. It was in the church of St. Michael adjoining to the palace that he was thus employed at even-song, with his lords in attendance beside him, when a stranger entered the church, and advanced towards the royal presence, announcing that he desired to speak with the king. And startling and more apostolic than that of the sacred fane itself was the appearance of the mysterious intruder, for his forehead was bare and bald, his long yellow hair on either side of his head flowed down to his shoulders; he was clothed in a blue mantle that was girt with a girdle of linen, and the rest of his dress was in conformity, being Asiatic in its character and unknown to all present, except through the church paintings and statues, that had begun to be imitated from those of Italy—it was the very aspect, and form, and costume of John, the beloved disciple of our Lord, the adopted son of the Virgin, even as he was wont to be set up for worship throughout the various churches of Christendom. The simplicity of his appearance, his authoritative manner as he leaned over the desk where the king was kneeling at prayer, and the language in which he addressed the monarch without craving attention by reverence or salutation, were in harmony with his apostolic and supernatural assumption. "Sir king," he said, "my mother hath sent me to you, desiring you not to pass at this time where thou art purposed; for if thou dost, thou wilt not fare well in thy journey, nor any that passeth with thee. Further, she bade thee mell [meddle] with no woman, nor use their counsel, nor let them touch thy body, nor thou theirs; for if thou do it, thou wilt be confounded and brought to shame." The king paused, and seemed to be studying a reply; but before time was given to utter a word, the mysterious appearance "vanished away, as he had been a blink of the sun or a whip of the whirlwind, and could no more be

¹ Lesley; Buchanan, xiii. 29; Hall and Holinshed.

seen.”¹ Sir David Lindsay of the Mount and Sir James Inglis, young men and officers of the royal household from whose lips the historian heard the strange tale, and who were standing at that time beside the king, thought to lay hands on the stranger to question him further; but his departure, that partook so much of the miraculous, defeated their purpose. It was doubtless a solemn, admonitory masquerade, wondrous both in its conception and execution. The queen, who was averse to a war with her brother and countrymen, and the wise, prudent, counsellors of James, who had set before him in vain the uncertainties and dangers of such an enterprise, would conceive themselves fully justified in adopting a form of warning so suited to his superstitious character and present mood. They knew, also, that if he persisted, any new light-o’-love that happened to cross his path, would be enough to traverse his proceedings however well devised, and mar the whole campaign. In these motives and agencies we may find cause enough for this marvellous incident, without having recourse to the supernatural.

But this was not the only attempt to arrest the expedition by warnings apparently unearthly. If the nobles could be alarmed, if their followers could be tempted to disperse, the object might be effected in spite of the scepticism or obstinacy of their sovereign. A coarser pageant was, therefore, to be brought to bear upon them, but equally well suited to their grosser faculties. In Scotland, the Prince of Darkness was dreaded under the name of Plotock or Plutock—perhaps derived from that of the king of the dead in the old Grecian mythology, and upon this circumstance the attempt was to be founded. Accordingly, when the artillery was in process of removal from Edinburgh, and James resting in his palace of Holyrood, there was a voice of thunder heard at midnight from the city cross where royal proclamations were wont to be made, calling upon all men, earls, lords, barons, gentlemen, and all burgesses of the city, every one being distinctly specified by name, to compare within the space of forty days before his master Plotock, wherever he should happen to appoint, and be for the time, under the pain of disobedience. At that late hour a worthy citizen of Edinburgh, called Mr. Richard Lawson, being indisposed in health, was walking in his gallery stair which was opposite the cross, instead of being in bed; and on hearing this tremendous summons, in which his own name was included, he ordered his servant to bring

his purse, and taking from it a crown piece, he threw it over the stair according to usage and form of Scottish law, exclaiming as he did it, “I appeal from that summons, judgment, and sentence, and betake me wholly to the mercy of God, and Christ Jesus his son!” What is added is too hard for modern credence: we are gravely told that of the persons whose names were rehearsed in this fatal citation, all perished at Flodden except the bold appellant who reserved his case to a higher tribunal.²

All being in readiness, the tournament-king commenced his march, apparently without any plan of action. He crossed the Tweed and entered England on the 22d of August (1513), encamping at Twizel Haugh in Northumberland, where the Twizel is joined by the river Till, and there he spent two precious days in idleness, as if to give the enemy full notice and time for preparation. On the 24th, for the encouragement of his followers who had anything to bequeath or lose, he made a proclamation, that if any man in his army should be slain or mortally wounded in the campaign, his heirs should be exempted of the usual feudal fines, and be free from royal ward, relief, and marriage, without distinction of age. He then besieged and took in succession the castles of Norham, Wark, and Etal, exploits which a Border baron might have attempted with a twentieth part of such warlike resources. Had James pressed forward with the ardour of his first advance, he might have won Carlisle, Newcastle, or York, as easily as these Border towers, which were unworthy of an hour’s delay. But in the capture of the castle of Ford, which was razed to the ground, he found in Lady Heron, the wife of the castellan, Sir William Heron, whom he still kept prisoner in Scotland, an allurements which made him alike forgetful of the claims of kingly duty and the warning he had received in the church of Linlithgow: the woman was artful as well as beautiful, and while she delayed the further operations of James by her blandishments, she was enabled to send notices to her countrymen of the purposes of the Scots and their king. Such was the worth of his marital fidelity to his royal partner, his chivalrous devotedness to the French queen for whose sake he had undertaken the campaign; he was the very Don Galaor of inconstant knights, without the steadfast, successful valour of the brother of Sir Amadis. While James was thus wasting opportunities upon worse than frivolous pleasures, his unwieldy army, which was encamped upon a barren district where provisions could not be obtained,

¹ Pitscottie, p. 111.² Pitscottie, p. 112.

and exposed without shelter to the worst inclemencies of weather, began very rapidly to desert and return homeward, so that at last none remained with him but his nobles and about 30,000 soldiers. In the meantime the Earl of Surrey, to whom Henry had committed the guardianship of the kingdom, was not idle; and while James was thus ensuring his own defeat, the earl raised an army of 26,000 men of the northern counties, and advanced deliberately towards the scene of action. Passing through Durham, he received the sacred banner of St. Cuthbert, and in his march he was joined by reinforcements which made his whole array somewhat more numerous than the shrunken army of the Scots. He could now become the assailant with safety, and his advantage lay in tempting James to battle, which he knew would be no difficult task. From having accompanied the queen to Scotland, and been a spectator of the chivalrous pageants that inaugurated the royal marriage, he was aware of the character of James, and the inducements that would persuade him to the conflict. He therefore sent him by Rouge Croix herald one of those defiant cartels already become obsolete in warfare, in which he reproached the king for breach of faith in thus invading England contrary to his solemn promises, and inviting him to battle on the succeeding Friday, if he dared to remain in the country so long.

To this challenge of Surrey another was added by his son, Lord Thomas Howard, now high-admiral of England, stating, that as he had borne a part in the death of that pirate, Andrew Barton, he was now ready to justify the deed, and that for this purpose he would lead the vanguard where he should easily be found, and would show as little mercy to the Scots as he expected to receive from them. As if these challenges had deprived him of the rights of refusal, James assented to the specified day, instead of selecting his own time for action. To the breach of faith with which he was charged he replied, that Henry was as solemnly bound as himself, and that this mutual compact Henry himself had been the first to violate. "And this," he added, "we take for our quarrel, and with God's grace shall defend the same at your appointed time, which we shall abide." Only one indication of prudence he afforded after so infatuated a choice. Perceiving that the level plain on which he was encamped was a disadvantageous position for battle, he changed it for the hill of Flodden, the last and lowest of the mountainous range on the opposite side of the Till, where his flanks were protected by the ruggedness of the ground, and his front by the river. In this excellent position he might yet

give battle on equal terms with the more numerous and better-appointed forces of his assailants.

Surrey now advanced with such rapidity that he had reached Wooler Haugh, within five miles of Flodden, before James was aware of his neighbourhood. But on finding the Scots so advantageously posted the earl was compelled to pause. He tried to allure James from the ground by again provoking his pride; and he sent his remonstrance by a herald, representing that he had established himself in a place more like a fortress or a camp than a level ground for a fair and equal trial of arms, and inviting him to come down and meet him midway. But James had already conceded too much, and would not even admit the herald into his presence. Sorely disappointed by this unexpected proof of firmness, and compelled from the barrenness of the wasted district and want of provisions to become the assailant, the Earl of Surrey adopted measures to reach the enemy by the safest and most available route. Breaking up his encampment he passed along the Till on the 8th of September, and advancing through rugged grounds on its east side he halted for the night at Barmoor Wood, about two miles from the Scottish army, the movement being concealed by an eminence on the east of Ford. On the following morning the English deployed to the north-west and crossed the Till near its confluence with the Tweed, the vanguard and artillery passing over by the bridge of Twizel, and the rear by a ford about a mile above the bridge. By a series of successful manoeuvres Surrey had thus brought himself round from the front to the rear of the Scottish army, the access to which was now both easy and safe. Thus with the enemy between them and their own country the Scots had no alternative but to fight, and that, too, at a disadvantage.

While the imprudence of James was allowing these slow movements to go on undisturbed his apathy did not extend over the whole host, although they were suffered to go on without interruption. When he assented to the challenge of Surrey, in which the day of battle was appointed, the Scottish nobles held a council of war, at which Patrick Lord Lindsay as the eldest and most experienced was desired to deliver his opinion upon the resolution of their sovereign. He condemned it altogether. Taking a homely common-sense view of the subject he declared that the stakes were unequal and unjust; and to illustrate this he compared the king to a rose-noble staked against the crooked halfpenny of a common dicer, by which vulgar coin he meant the Earl of Surrey. If they must needs dice in a game of life and death let the

king be first removed from the board, and let the Scottish nobles afterwards pit themselves against those of England and fight it out to the death. The homely apologue and its conclusion pleased the lords but not the king, who swore in high wrath that as soon as he reached home he would hang Lord Lindsay over his own gate. While the Scottish nobles were looking on at the English advance and calculating its consequences the Earl of Angus, known as Archibald Bell-the-Cat, now an aged man, entreated James either to assail the enemy at once while they were entangled among their own manœuvres, or at least order a retreat, while time yet permitted; but the king only repeated, "Angus, if you are afraid you may go home." The insulted warrior burst into tears. "My age," he sobbed, "makes my body useless, and my counsel is despised; but I leave my two sons and my followers in the field: may the end be well, and my foreboding unfounded!" Borthwick, the king's master-gunner, had placed his admirable battery of cannon so as to command the bridge of Twizel; and when the English vanguard and artillery were crossing he knelt and craved the king's permission to begin the cannonade, declaring that he could thus cut the bridge and destroy that half of the army while the other was crossing the Till by the ford. But the king, "like a man that had been reft of his wit," replied, "I'll hang you, quarter you, and draw you, if you shoot one shot this day. I am determined that I will have them all before me on a plain field and see what they can all do before me."¹

Every difficulty being surmounted by the Earl of Surrey, and there being nothing but an easy, gentle ascent between him and the Scottish rearward, he divided his army into two large battles, each battle having two wings. On perceiving this the Scots set fire to their encampment and came down the hill to occupy the eminence where the village of Brankstone now stands, as its possession by the enemy would have given the latter an important advantage. The thick, driving smoke of their huts to which they had set fire enveloped the two armies and concealed them from each other, so that when it had blown aside they discovered that they were only separated by the short distance of two furlongs. The Scots were drawn up in four battalions, of which the king commanded the centre confronting that of the English led by Surrey himself; the Scottish right wing was commanded by the Earls of Lennox and Argyle, and the left by the Earls of Crawford, Montrose, Huntly, and Home; while the reserve, consisting

of the men of Lothian, was commanded by the Earl of Bothwell.

At four o'clock in the afternoon of the 9th of September the battle of Flodden commenced. It began by a furious attack of the extreme left vanguard of the Scottish army commanded by the earls of Huntly and Home upon the opposite portion of the English vanguard commanded by Sir Edmond Howard. The impetuosity of the onset broke the English ranks and threw them into disorder; the banner of their leader was struck down, and himself narrowly escaped by retiring to the division in the vanguard commanded by his brother, the high admiral. This was a dangerous blow at the outset; and dreading its consequences Lord Thomas Howard plucked the *Agnus Dei* from his breast and sent it in token to his father, who was in the centre of the vanguard, entreating him to extend his line so as to protect and rally that portion of the front which had already given way. There was no time, indeed, for such a manœuvre; but happily for them the cavalry of Lord Dacre, which formed the English reserve, advanced at full speed, charged the victorious troops of Huntly, and, being seconded by the admiral, put them to the rout while Home and his Borderers were already at a distance, and beginning the work of plunder as if the victory had been won. Following their success Dacre and the admiral fell upon the next portion of the Scottish vanguard commanded by the earls of Crawford and Montrose; but here they were held in check by a courage and spirit equal to their own. While these alternate changes were going on James, who commanded the centre, was not idle: at the head of the flower of his army and his chief nobles he bore down upon the English centre under the Earl of Surrey; and here it was that the chief interest of the field was now concentrated, as well as the utmost courage and strength of the two brave contending nations. The charge of the Scots, animated by the presence of their king, who fought in the front rank like a common man-at-arms, was terrible and all but decisive; the ranks of the English centre reeled, and were on the point of being rent asunder, while the banner of the earl himself was well nigh plucked from its place by the hands that were striking down its defenders. But at this desperate moment Dacre and the admiral, who had routed the division under Crawford and Montrose, advanced to their leader's relief, and by a sudden charge upon the left of the Scottish van turned the tide of its success, and might have succeeded in overpowering it had not the Earl of Bothwell, who commanded the Scottish reserve, hastened up in time to the rescue. While these proceed-

¹ Pitscottie.

ings were going on, in which the chief portions of the two armies were engaged over nearly the whole extent of the field in a close hand-to-hand struggle, and as yet upon equal terms, the right wing of the Scottish army, chiefly composed of Highlanders and Islesmen under the earls of Lennox and Argyle—men who had little if any defensive armour, were dreadfully galled by the English archery without the means of returning it. Such men were little likely to stand still like parish butts to be shot at; the hot Celtic blood was on fire to see so many frieze mantles riddled, and clansmen struck to the earth by a distant foe; and, impatient for close action and revenge, they brandished their axes and two-handed claymores, and advanced at full run upon the English left commanded by Sir Edward Stanley. It was in vain that de la Motte, the French ambassador, who was present, and other foreign officers, threw themselves in their way to point out the danger of such a movement and adjure them to wait the moment of advantage; their language was unintelligible, and their signs were disregarded. Gathering heat and force as they advanced, this torrent of plaided warriors burst upon the English with a shock under which valour, strength, and steel armour of defence were unavailing. But their first dint was almost their last effort; their frenzy was quickly exhausted by its own violence; and the astonished English, who had never before encountered such a whirlwind of battle, doggedly rallied, and standing shoulder to shoulder presented such a thick forest of levelled lances and brown bills, as gored the assailants in heaps wherever they attempted to break in. The result was inevitable: the assailants were driven back; their loose ranks were broken or borne to the earth by the steady advance of their enemies, and they were driven to hopeless flight, leaving their brave commanders, Argyle and Lennox, and the best of their chieftainry dead upon the field.

From this fatal defeat of the left wing our attention is called back to the Scottish centre, where the fortunes of the kingdom were at stake. It still continued to hold out bravely, and with hopeful chances of success, although assailed in front by the Earl of Surrey, and on its left flank by Dacre and the admiral. James still combated on foot in the front ranks of his spearmen, and his nobles, whom his rashness had so fatally involved, thought only of saving him or dying by his side. As the ground was slippery with blood they drew off their boots and shoes, that their footing might be the more secure and their blows more certain; and closing the defensive ring of their bodies round their beloved leader they continued the fight, although

the afternoon was far spent, and the shades of the long autumnal evening were drawing on. It is said, too, and by a historian who had the means of personal information, that even yet an attempt was made for his rescue which might have been successful. Huntly and Home had met after the defeat of the former leader, and Huntly proposed that they should go to the king's assistance; but to this Home replied, "He does well that does for himself; we have fought their vanguards and won the same; let the rest do their part as well as we." It was an answer worthy of a pillaging Border noble—of the hero of the fight of Broomhouse, with the place of action still in view. "I will not suffer my native prince to be overcome by his enemies before my eyes," cried the generous Huntly; and he proceeded with trumpet and slughorn to call his scattered troops together, that they might pass to the king's assistance. But before he could effect his purpose the king had fallen. After he had defeated the Scottish right wing Stanley, instead of wasting time in pursuing the fugitives, wheeled round and attacked the rear of the Scottish centre. Thus enveloped on all sides, and everywhere borne down by the weight of assailants, James and his gallant nobles continued their resistance, although no hope was left to them but a soldier's death. He was the first to fall pierced by many wounds; but the nobles gathered and continued to fight round his body, until darkness ended the strife without disclosing as yet with what party the victory remained. Even Surrey was still uncertain of his good fortune, as the followers of Home still kept the field and threatened a fresh attack; and the earl, instead of ordering a pursuit, encamped on the field and appointed a careful watch to be kept up during the night. But the Scots were not long in ascertaining their loss, and their broken bands were moving sadly and silently towards the Tweed during the hours of darkness. It was only when morning dawned, and when a large body of the Scots that still remained upon the hill and threatened an attack had been dispersed by a few discharges of cannon, that Surrey was convinced that the victory was his own.¹

Such was the battle of Flodden, a name of woe and lamentation to Scotsmen, and which even yet they can scarcely hear without a pang. It was not that any national honour was lost, for the fight had been gallantly contested on equal terms to the last, or that the slaughter had been unusually great, as their loss did not exceed ten thousand men, while that of

¹ Lesley; Pitscottie; Buchanan; Hall; Holinshed; Stow; Henry Weber's edition of the *Battle of Flodden*.

A SURVIVOR OF FLODDEN RETURNS TO EDINBURGH
WITH NEWS OF THE DEFEAT.

In the year A.D. 1513 James IV. of Scotland led a numerous and well-equipped army of invasion into the Northern Counties of England. The progress of the Scottish army was barred at the village of Flodden, in Northumberland, by a large force commanded by the Earl of Surrey. Here the two armies joined battle, both sides fighting with great determination, so that for several hours the issue was doubtful. In the end the Scots were defeated with great slaughter, and the King slain. The illustration, in this instance, has been suggested by the spirited ballad of W. E. Aytoun, entitled "Edinburgh after Flodden." The captain of the City Band has just returned to Edinburgh after the disastrous fight, and—

Round him crash the people, crying
Tell us all—oh, tell us true!



ALFRED PEARSE.

A SURVIVOR OF FLODDEN.

RANDOLPH MURRAY RETURNS TO EDINBURGH WITH NEWS OF THE DEFEAT (A.D. 1513).

Round him crush the people, crying,
Tell us all—oh, tell us true!

W. E. Aytoun.

Vol. i. p. 537.

England was of almost equal amount. But the noblest, the bravest, the best of Scotland had indeed been "wede away;" her princely earls and lords, the knights and barons who accompanied their banner, the gallant high-born young squires who sought to win their spurs upon a stricken field and amidst the testimonies of their prowess—they had fallen in such abundance that there was scarcely a family of name in Scotland that had not the death of a near kinsman to deplore. Of these there were thirteen belted earls and fifteen lords and chiefs of clans, the Archbishop of St. Andrews, natural son of the king and the pupil of Erasmus, the Bishops of Caithness and the Isles, the Abbots of Inchaffray and Kilwinning, and the Dean of Glasgow. Of gentlemen of high rank and the heads of noble houses there were at least fifty. But the king had also fallen, the only Scottish sovereign who had perished on the field of battle since the time of Malcolm III. He had died within a few feet of the Earl of Surrey himself; and when the body was dragged from among a heap of slain it was so disfigured by many wounds as to be recognized with difficulty by Lord Dacre, who had been familiarly acquainted with James. And even yet the Scots would not believe that he had fallen in battle; and it was reported that he had been seen alive after his defeat, that he had departed an unknown pilgrim to Palestine to weep over his sins and errors at the Holy Sepulchre, and that he would yet return to Scotland and resume his royal authority. It was no solitary instance of such a national hope, for other kings who like him had perished in the obscurity of fight and amidst a disastrous defeat followed by great public calamities had been believed to have survived, and were expected to return to their

longing subjects when the public extremity was at the worst.¹

Thus perished James IV. in the forty-second year of his age. Although his illegitimate children by various mothers were numerous, none of his lawful offspring had survived except a male infant, afterwards the unfortunate James V. In his character were exhibited the elements that constitute a great sovereign and national benefactor; and under his able rule Scotland enjoyed the benefits of order, peace, and prosperity in a measure that was unexampled in any former period unless we except that of Alexander III. While he quelled the dissensions and secured the love of his restless divided subjects, he maintained peace with foreign powers and caused the kingdom to be respected abroad by the wisdom and vigour of his administration. But these great qualities were wanting in consistency, and one unhappy failing sufficed to undo the glories of a prosperous reign. James IV. tried to convert into a reality a character which Francis I. and Henry VIII. assumed merely in masquerade and for the purposes of state splendour and temporary amusement. He would needs be a king of romance; and to realize this antiquated or fictitious ideal he squandered the resources of his kingdom as fast as he created them, and finally set all upon a single hazard where even success would have scarcely been a compensation. And thus his reign was of little real benefit, whilst his fall left Scotland in a worse plight than he found it. The whole toil of his life was wrecked upon the disastrous field of Flodden.

¹ These were the Emperor Frederick Barbarossa of Germany; Charles the Bold, Duke of Burgundy; Roderick, the last Gothic King of Spain; Sebastian of Portugal; and the earliest of all, Arthur, King of the Britons.

CHAPTER III.

REIGN OF JAMES V. (1513-1521).

Precautions adopted in Edinburgh after the battle of Flodden—Cessation of hostilities between the two kingdoms—Queen Margaret appointed regent—Political parties into which the nation was divided—Predominance of the French party—Troubles in Scotland—The Duke of Albany invited to assume the regency—Causes of his delay in France—Marriage of Queen Margaret to the Earl of Angus—the Earl of Arran's intrigues for the regency—Conflict between the partisans of Angus and Arran in the streets of Edinburgh—Quarrels among the Scottish prelates—Their contest for the vacant archbishopric of St. Andrews—Election of Forman to the see—Continuing quarrels among the nobles—Public insecurity—Dangerous intrigues of King Henry among the Scots—His proposals to Margaret for the removal of James V. to England—Arrival of the Duke of Albany from France—His welcome in Scotland—His character—Offensive nature of his first proceedings—Albany endeavours to obtain the guardianship of the young king—Margaret's behaviour on the demand for the surrender of her children—She retires with the young princes to Stirling—Albany besieges her in the castle of Stirling—She is compelled to submit—Negotiation of Albany with the queen—War between Albany and the Earl of Home—Margaret escapes from the castle of Edinburgh—She flies with her husband into England—Albany's proceedings against the Earl of Arran—Death of the Duke of Ross—Albany becomes weary of the regency—He is reconciled to the Earls of Angus and Home—Offensive movements of Henry for the suppression of the French party in Scotland—Albany resolves to retire from Scotland—He causes the Earl of Home to be executed—Proceedings of the parliament—Albany despairs of assistance from France—He announces his purpose to leave Scotland—His stipulations with the Scottish parliament—His departure to France—Queen Margaret's return to Scotland—Albany's negotiations in France about Scottish affairs—Assassination of De la Bastie by the Homes—The Earl of Arran succeeds to temporary authority—His proceedings against the murderers of De la Bastie—Margaret seeks a divorce from her husband—Her purpose opposed by King Henry—Growing power of the Earl of Angus—His arrogance to the French ambassadors—His turbulent proceedings against Edinburgh and the provostship—Negotiations of France for a renewed alliance with Scotland—Margaret abandons the English party and joins that of France—She negotiates with the Duke of Albany—The duke returns to Scotland.

Evil tidings proverbially fly fast, and no national calamity of the Scots as yet had equalled that of the battle of Flodden. By a single stroke the land had been bereaved not only of its king but its hereditary leaders—the men wise in council and strong in battle, whose ancestors had so bravely defended Scotland in her extremity, and whose very names were reckoned a guarantee for the national safety. It was in Edinburgh that the loss was especially felt and lamented. The streets were filled with widowed wives and childless mothers, with bereaved parents and helpless orphans, whose shrieks and lamentations gave voice to the general sorrow; while even the stout of heart were compelled to tremble at the apprehension that this defenceless state of the kingdom would tempt an invasion of the conquerors, and that a march upon the Scottish capital would be their first achievement. So ill provided, also, was Edinburgh for such a hostile visit that even her civic council-hall as well as her palace and parliament was empty, for its chief magistrates had accompanied the king and fallen with him in battle. But the merchants to whom the temporary custody of the city had been transferred exhibited a noble example of devoted courage in this season of universal dismay.

They issued a proclamation in which they treated the event of Flodden as an uncertain report, upon which, therefore, men's judgments might for the present be suspended. They called upon the citizens to arm for the town's defence in case of the worst, and be ready for military duty at the first warning of the common bell. They also ordered that all females, on pain of banishment, should cease from crying and lamenting in the streets and confine themselves to their houses; while they recommended that those of the better sort should repair to the churches and offer prayers to Heaven for the king, and the army, and their citizens who had accompanied them.¹ By these prompt measures the loud outcry was hushed and order restored; the citizens betook themselves to their weapons and forgot their sorrows in the hope of action and revenge; and had the Earl of Surrey crossed the Border he would soon have been met by another army of Scots ready to give battle in the midst of their own fields and for their own native firesides. But Surrey wisely abstained from the attempt. He had fulfilled his commission by successfully acting

¹ Lord Hailes' *Remarks on the History of Scotland*, chap. viii.

on the defensive, and any aggressive movement would be on his own responsibility. His army had paid the usual penalty of such a signal victory, and was too diminished for the hazards of a Scottish inroad. He also knew that by raising fresh levies for the purpose he might exhaust those resources which needed to be reserved for the more important demands of his master in France. He therefore disbanded his army after he had gathered up the trophies of his success and placed the English Border in a state of defence. That he acted judiciously by this forbearance was attested by the approbation of his sovereign, who afterwards created him Duke of Norfolk.

The sudden cessation of hostilities afforded a breathing time to the Scots to recover from the stunning blow and take measures for the restoration of order. A national council was accordingly convened at Perth early in October, but, in consequence of the havoc that had been made among the ranks of the nobility, its members were principally churchmen.¹ The only surviving child of the late king by Margaret his queen was James, an infant not fully eighteen months old; and with the prospect of a long minority before them, always a dismal season in Scotland, they crowned him king at Scone, amidst applause that was stifled in moaning. The next question was about the office of the regency, and for this the late king had made some provision in his will by investing Margaret with the management of affairs in the event of his own demise in his expedition to England. But the country had had enough of female regencies, and was ever impatient under the domination of a woman. Margaret also was of the country of those who had slain her husband—the sister of the king with whom they were at war, and who would use every means to subdue and enslave them. But on the other hand it would be indecorous to set aside the wishes of their beloved sovereign, and most unsafe in the present state of things to provoke the resentment of her royal brother. She was also in the third month of her pregnancy, and in the event of the death of James V. in his minority might give birth to a new heir to the Scottish crown. A compromise, as is usual in such difficulties, was the consequence, and Margaret was to exercise the office of regent for the time being, having for her principal advisers James Beaton, Archbishop of Glasgow, and the Earls of Huntly and Angus, while the castle of Stirling and the infant king were committed to the keeping of Lord Borthwick.

This arrangement by which a female was at

the head of affairs was of short duration. There were now two parties in Scotland whom circumstances were calling forth into keen activity, and whose contentions were soon to be invigorated with the religious element. The one party was for peace and alliance with England, as the only means by which the unhappy breach between the two kingdoms could be healed; and of this party, the queen and her adherents were the representatives. The other party were they who were still enamoured of the plunder of fertile England, the only opportunity of obtaining which was by keeping alive the old contentions—or they who still believed that the most effectual safeguard of their country was the alliance and aid of France. This last party was strong in the turbulent nobility, and in the popular remembrance of three centuries of wrong and oppression endured at the hands of England; while the rival faction was not only regarded as a new, but an unpatriotic cause, which no true-hearted Scotsman would cherish. As yet it appeared to them impossible that the English and Scotch through inhabiting one island and derived from the same race, could ever be brought to act in concert, or be anything but irreconcilable enemies. Nor was the character of the queen fitted to exalt the cause of which, for the present, she was the recognized head. Married at the early age of sixteen, her education had been imperfect and her experience immature; and although she possessed great natural talents, she was, like her brother, haughty, rash, and overbearing, qualities not likely, in a female and an Englishwoman, to secure the affections of such a people as the Scots. As yet, also, she was only twenty-four years old, while her love of pleasure and illicit indulgence was scarcely inferior to that of Henry VIII. himself. It was evident that she could not long be obeyed as regent of Scotland. Accordingly, the French faction of the surviving nobles began very speedily to turn their attention to France, at the court of which resided John Duke of Albany, the son of that Alexander, the brother of James III., who had escaped from the Castle of Edinburgh; and as John was now nearest of kin to the royal house after the infant James V., he was thus, for the time, presumptive heir to the Scottish crown, and therefore the fittest person to hold the office of regent. Nor were circumstances wanting in the conduct of Henry VIII. towards Scotland to justify and confirm this inclination of the French faction. On receiving tidings of the battle of Flodden, his first thought seems to have been that Scotland as well as France might soon become his own; and he sent orders

¹ Letter of Lord Dacre to the Bishop of Durham.

from his camp to Lord Dacre, his warden of the eastern marches, to follow up the advantage, to make inroads into Scotland upon an extensive scale, to waste and destroy with fire and sword—and above all not to admit to ransom the Scottish nobles who had been taken prisoners at Flodden. This was very different from the high magnanimity and sentimental declarations which historians have attributed to Henry on critical occasions. But already the prisoners had ransomed themselves and been dismissed, and as for the invasions into Scotland, neither the state of the weather nor the nature of his resources gave Dacre an opportunity of fulfilling his master's orders. What he could, however, he attempted, by an inroad with three thousand horse and three hundred infantry, in which he burned the petty towns of Rowcastle and Langton, and swept the districts upon the Teviot of whatever plunder could be collected, until he was obliged to retire upon the advance of the Earl of Home with two thousand of his Borderers. This paltry invasion, which showed that no peace was as yet to be expected with England, only irritated the public feeling, and strengthened the French party who were anxious to have the Duke of Albany at their head.¹

In consequence of these favourable movements in his behalf the Duke of Albany, who was unable at this time to visit Scotland, sent over the *Sieur Darcie de la Bastie*, a gallant knight well known to the Scottish court. With him came the Earl of Arran, son of that Mary, sister of James III., whose pathetic history is not easily forgot.² The earl brought with him the scanty remains of that gallant fleet which he had shown himself so unfit to manage, and seems to have thought, from the nearness of his relationship to the king, that the chief conduct of public affairs would be intrusted to his keeping. But in the Earl of Home he found a powerful rival, by whom his expectations were thwarted. Nor was this the worst; for the old feuds among the surviving nobles and barons, no longer held in check by the commanding ascendancy of James IV., sprang up into their old luxuriance, while the clergy were quarrelling among themselves about the benefices that had fallen vacant on account of the havoc at Flodden. The season of lawlessness also called forth fresh bands of marauders, who, under the pretext of belonging to this or that lord, traversed the northern districts and plundered alike both the laity and clergy. And

to add to these evils, which for many years had been unknown, the inroads from the English border were continued, while there was daily less agreement in opposing them. Lord Dacre also, who was as politic as he was brave, had spies in Scotland whom he employed not only to send him intelligence, but to foment the divisions and quarrels of the country, and thus reduce it to still greater helplessness. It was time that the matured chief of the house of Stewart should be recalled from exile, as no authority short of his could compose these public calamities. So urgent was the need of his presence, and so much, indeed, was hoped from it, that some had even proposed to invest him with royalty at once, as the only means of restoring the national tranquillity.³ At all events it was necessary that he should be appointed regent, and to this even the queen herself was not unwilling, for in the midst of these dissensions she was delivered of a young prince who was named Alexander, and created Duke of Ross; and when, after her recovery, she appealed to the sympathy of her brother against the hostility of the lords of the French faction, Henry only responded to her appeals by the worst of all remedies—by fresh orders for invasion, havoc, and massacre. Nor was she now, it may be, so indifferent to the cause of France as before, as overtures were already in progress for a lasting peace between the Kings of France and England, to be cemented by a marriage of the former to a sister of Henry—and that sister might chance to be herself! But Louis XII. quickly settled that question by espousing her younger sister, Mary. An invitation was sent from the Scottish parliament by *Ilay* herald to the Duke of Albany at the court of France, to return to Scotland and assume the tutorship of the young king and regency of the kingdom. The duke was ready to comply, but here Louis XII. ungenerously stepped in to hinder his departure. The present interest of the French king was to have peace and alliance with England, and to obtain this object he was ready to sacrifice his alliance with Scotland, as his predecessors had done in similar circumstances. Henry had requested him to delay the duke's departure, as the arrival of the latter in Scotland would be unfavourable to the English interests, and Louis had acted accordingly, pretending all the while to the duke that he was reluctant to part with so good and so useful a subject.⁴

While Albany was thus compelled to postpone his departure an event occurred in Scot-

¹ Letters of Lord Dacre to Henry in October and November, 1513. State Papers Collection.

² Lesley, p. 97.

³ Letter of Christopher Coe to Wolsey, 1st April, 1514. Quoted in Pinkerton, vol. ii. p. 120.

⁴ Lesley, p. 99. Letter of Margaret to Lord Dacre in August, 1514.

land that was startling to all parties. Mention has already been made of the retirement of Archibald, Earl of Angus, once the dreaded Bell-the-Cat, from Flodden, when his counsels were useless and his frame too old for action. He left his two sons behind him, who perished in the battle; and sick of the world, and broken-hearted at his loss, the ancient warrior retired into a monastery, where in a few weeks he was gathered to his fathers. He was succeeded by his grandson; and this new head of the Douglasses added to the personal valour of his renowned race a beauty and gracefulness of person that made him conspicuous among the nobility of Scotland. But beyond these qualities, and his great possessions and power, he had as yet manifested little to recommend him; being young, turbulent, and ignorant, and with few to instruct or advise him. He had caught, however, the eye and affections of Margaret, whose loves were as impetuous as those of her brother, so that in an indecently short period after her recovery from childbirth she became the wife of the young, gallant, handsome Earl of Angus. Political inducements there were on either side, although these were probably after-thoughts rather than precursors of this hasty, unexpected union; for while the earl might hope, from his marriage with the queen, to obtain the guardianship of the young king and the government of the kingdom, Margaret could find in him a protector against the arrogant nobles, especially the Earl of Home, his feudal rival and enemy, and secure a powerful addition to the English faction in Scotland, whose cause was as yet in its infancy. But Margaret in her haste seems to have forgot that by the terms of her husband's will this second marriage had cancelled all her claims to the regency, and left the way completely open to the entrance of the Duke of Albany.¹

This fact of the queen's legal forfeiture of the regency inspired the ambition of the Earl of Arran, and he thought that his own claim to the office during the absence of Albany was incontestable. He accordingly advanced his claim, founded on his propinquity to the royal house, but the lords of council were in no haste to accede to his demand. He had already shown his incompetency for such an office; and the Earl of Angus was too formidable to be provoked. In the meantime Angus, on hearing of this appeal, repaired to Edinburgh to counteract it, followed by a train of four hundred Douglas' men armed with jack and spear. On hearing of this unwelcome arrival the Earl of Arran,

Beaton, Archbishop of Glasgow, and their accomplices gave orders to shut the town gates, intending to take Angus prisoner; but the proud earl, on being warned of their purpose and advised to make his escape, resolved to remain and fight out the quarrel in the streets of Edinburgh. For this purpose he mustered his friends and attendants, and posted himself at the Nether Bow. As the bloodshed of such a conflict was likely to be great and the issue uncertain, Gavin Douglas, the son of Bell-the-Cat and Abbot of Arbroath, endeavoured to mediate between the two parties, and for that end went to the Black Friars Church, where he found Beaton, his brother churchman, arrayed in the costume of Christian peace and devotion. He told him of the dangerous condition in which matters were ripened for conflict, and implored him to interpose, adding by way of additional inducement, "Some say, my lord, that you have the wyte [blame] of it." Beaton hastened to disclaim such a charge, and swore, "By my conscience I know not the matter!" and to confirm his oath he too hastily smote his breast with his open palm; but within the rochet was heard the rattling of an unclerical corselet. "I see, my lord," said the sarcastic poet, "that your conscience is not sound, for I hear it clatter." Perceiving that no peaceful measures were to be expected from a prelate so prepared, Gavin Douglas passed onward to the Earl of Arran and his chivalrous brother, Sir Patrick Hamilton, to whom he explained that Angus desired nothing more than an interview with Margaret his wife, in the castle of Edinburgh, after which he would depart from the town in peace. To this reasonable proposal, which was backed by the solicitations of his brother, the Earl of Arran consented, and the whole matter might have terminated without violence but for the hot interference of Sir James Hamilton, the earl's illegitimate son, whom the old historian calls "a bloody butcher that ever thirsted for blood." Disappointed in his hopes of an affray he fiercely told his uncle that he had no will to fight in his friend's quarrel, though it were never so just; and Sir Patrick, transported to fury by such an unjust taunt, exclaimed, "Bastard smaik! thou liest: I shall fight this day where thou darest not be seen!" He rushed out of the house, followed by the armed adherents of the Hamiltons, who were equally impatient for the fight; and on marking their impetuous coming up the High Street Angus, who was stationed at the head of the West Bow, with his retainers drawn out in order for battle, saw that a fight was at hand, and gave hasty orders to his troop to spare the life of Sir Patrick Hamilton. But it was too late: Sir Patrick, who was far in advance of his

¹ Lesley, pp. 99, 100.

followers, was the first that fell, and the fight was waged between the two parties with such feudal hatred that seventy-two partisans of the Hamiltons, including several gentlemen, lay dead on the street. The rest of their party were so completely driven from the town that they were fain to escape through the North Loch, and among the fugitives were the Earl of Arran himself and Sir James, his unworthy son. So completely, indeed, were they swept off the scene of conflict that this street battle was commemorated under the title of "Cleanse the causeway." As for Beaton, who ought to have been elsewhere or better occupied, he fled to the Black Friars Church and ensconced himself behind the high altar. But this sacred place was no protection from feudal hatred, for he was searched after and found out; his rochet was torn from his back; and it might have fared still worse with him had not Gavin Douglas interposed and represented to the captors how sinful it was to lay violent hands upon a consecrated bishop. After all this bloodshed nothing more occurred than what had been originally requested, and which would have been been granted but for an angry word; for "the Earl of Angus passed to the castle and spake with the queen at his pleasure."¹

While such quarrels among the nobles were but characteristic events of the period, those of the priesthood were at least equal in hatred, while they were prosecuted in part by the same violent agencies. As the most important clerical holdings in the kingdom had become vacant by the death of their occupants at Flodden, Margaret had used the hopes which the filling up of these vacancies had occasioned to establish her own tenure of the regency. The right of nominating to such offices was still tenaciously held by the Scottish sovereigns, notwithstanding the remonstrances of Rome and the submissive example of the other European courts; and the pontiff was allowed nothing more than the confirmation of those elections which the civil power had been pleased to make. Among the sees to be filled up was the most important one of St. Andrews, and this the queen had offered to the learned, pious, and patriotic William Elphinstone, Bishop of Aberdeen; but in consequence of his old age and infirmities he had declined the offer. But three ardent competitors for the promotion started up in his room. These were Gavin Douglas, whom the queen had made Abbot of Arbroath on her marriage to his nephew; John Hepburn, prior of St. Andrews;

and Forman, Bishop of Moray. Douglas, as might have been expected, was the man of the queen's choice, and him she nominated to the see; but John Hepburn, a bold, unscrupulous, avaricious man, who had lifted the rents of the bishopric during the vacancy, prevailed upon the chapter of St. Andrews to elect him to the office according to a practice which had sometimes been followed there at a very early period. As for Andrew Forman, whom we have hitherto known as a treacherous ambassador and selfish intriguer who had sacrificed everything to his own interests, he applied to neither queen nor chapter, but to the pontiff himself; and through the influence he had established at Rome he obtained his nomination to the see, and a papal bull to that effect. Thus the old quarrel for the popedom itself, when three occupants at once assumed the authority of St. Peter and excommunicated each other without mercy, and to the great confusion of Christendom, was about to be revived in the poor primacy of Scotland. But heavier weapons than either texts or curses were to be used in this northern controversy. Hepburn was the first to proceed to action; and being backed by all the Hepburns, now a very powerful clan, he not only prevented the bulls of Forman's election from being published, but assailed the castle or archiepiscopal palace of St. Andrews, and drove out the garrison of the Douglasses, by whom it was held for the abbot of Arbroath. While the queen and Angus were chafing at this disregard of their authority in such a violent rejection of their nominee, and devising means for his reinstatement, Forman was not idle. Although his wealth was immense, and his livings numerous, being among others Archbishop of Bourges in France and papal legate for Scotland, he was in no mood to forego the primacy of his native country; and having won over to his interests the Earl of Home, by promising to bestow the rich priory of Coldingham upon his brother, the earl mustered such a formidable array to aid the elect of the pope that Forman's bulls were publicly and regularly proclaimed in spite of all the opposition of the Hepburns. After this proclamation the bishop, accompanied by his warlike array, proceeded from Edinburgh to St. Andrews for the purpose of entering into possession; but on arriving at his diocesan town he found that Prior Hepburn had so effectually fortified the cathedral with men, artillery, and warlike weapons, that he could obtain entrance neither into church nor castle. It was well that this scandalous controversy went no farther. The parties, indeed, seemed to awaken to a sense of shame just when it had approached the uncanonical point of blood-shedding, and a compromise was made,

¹ "The date of this skirmish," Pitscottie adds with unwonted minuteness in chronology, "was in the year of God one thousand, five hundred, and fifteen years, in the month of May."

"CLEANSE THE CAUSEWAY."

When James IV. was killed at the Battle of Flodden he left an infant son to be his successor, and thus the question of who was to act as Regent gave occasion for heated rivalry among certain of the Scottish nobles. Chief among the claimants were the Earl of Arran, who was a close kinsman to the royal house, and the Earl of Angus, who had already married the widow of the late king. As it chanced that these two noblemen, each with a powerful retinue, were visiting Edinburgh at the same time, Sir Patrick Hamilton, brother to the Earl of Arran, resolved to settle the matter by force of arms. He led his followers up the High Street, and the impetuous combatants met at the head of the Hot Stairs. So deadly fierce was the onslaught, that in a short time the Hamiltons were routed, while leaving seventy-two of their number killed in the street. So completely, indeed, were the Hamiltons swept away by the Douglases, under the Earl of Angus, that this fight was ever afterwards known as "Cleanse the Causeway."

"CLEANSE THE CAUSEWAY."

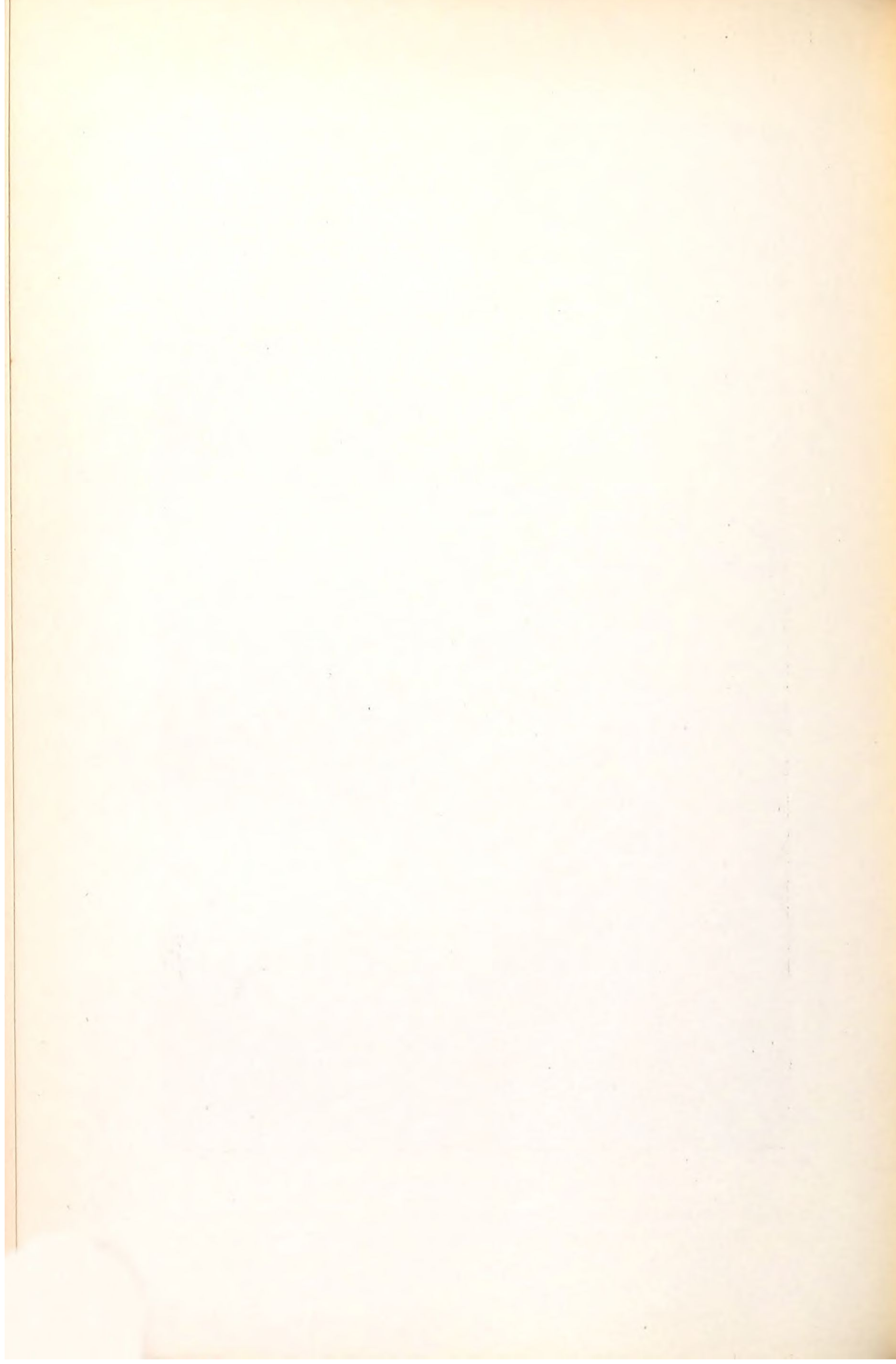
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ALFRED PEARSE.

"CLEANSE THE CAUSEWAY."

THE EARL OF ANGUS AND HIS SPEARMEN ATTACKED BY SIR PATRICK HAMILTON AND HIS FOLLOWERS IN THE HIGH STREET, EDINBURGH,—FIGHT KNOWN AS "CLEANSE THE CAUSEWAY" (A.D. 1515).



by which the issue was changed from violence and slaughter to the more peaceful practices of simony. James Hepburn, brother of the prior, was to be promoted to the bishopric of Moray; the prior himself was allowed to retain the rents of St. Andrews, which he had already lifted, and was to receive certain others, while Forman was recognized as primate and installed in his new see. As for Gavin Douglas, he was compensated for his disappointment by a nomination to the bishopric of Dunkeld. This arrangement, by which the quarrel was hastily huddled up, gave satisfaction to none of the parties; and while the queen and Angus were incensed at their defeat, by which the French faction was so greatly strengthened, Hepburn, the new Bishop of Moray, conceived an implacable hatred of the Homes, through whom Forman had triumphed, and lay in wait for an opportunity of revenge.¹

Such continued to be the troubled state of affairs in this period of doubtful government. The queen's authority, in consequence of the waste of her revenues and the apathy of her brother Henry, was insufficient to support the English cause in Scotland against that of France, while her powerful husband had need of all his resources to defend himself against his own personal enemies. Arran, who hated both parties alike because they interfered with his own views upon the regency, endeavoured with an ambuscade of six hundred men well provided with artillery to waylay the Earl of Angus on his return from an interview with the Earl of Lennox at Glasgow, and on the failure of this treacherous scheme he proposed to the Lords Home, Cassilis, and Semple to besiege Douglas in one of his own castles. Such quarrels and such lawless musters of armed men made the highways so unsafe, that it was dangerous to pass from one town to another; public confidence was at an end, and the intercourse of traffic suspended.² It seemed as if the country had been thrown a whole century backward since the close of the reign of James IV. But more dangerous still to the peace and the liberties of Scotland were those dark underground intrigues which Henry VIII. had now commenced, and which were more effectual for the suppression, if not the subjugation of the Scots than armies and invasions; it was by the employment of spies to watch, of artful emissaries to corrupt, and money to purchase the needy aristocracy of Scotland, that Henry and afterwards Elizabeth were to obtain that ascendancy

in Scottish affairs which the arms and valour of their predecessors had been unable to secure. It was the commencement of that new era of political wisdom and craft instead of force and violence by which European kingdoms were now to be governed and enemies subdued; but the change was one which, as in other matters, the Scots were slow to perceive, and the latest to learn and understand, and which even when learned they had not the means of using. Of these arts, of this system as brought to bear by England against Scotland, Wolsey was the subtle contriving head, and Lord Dacre the active right arm, and the proofs of their interference were beginning already to be apparent in the accession of strength which the English party in Scotland was acquiring. The powerful Earl of Lennox embraced the cause of the queen, and the lords who were connected with him by feudal alliance followed his example. Such we learn from the letters of Adam Williamson, a Scot, but now established in England, and employed as an envoy and spy against his native country; and from his communications we learn the motives of actions, and the causes of shiftings and changes both of parties and individuals, which would otherwise be incomprehensible. Henry, ever sanguine and impetuous, appears to have been so confident at the success of these initiatory attempts as to have proposed to his sister that she should privately convey herself into England with her two sons as the best escape from her present difficulties; and he held out to her the prospect that James V. would in consequence be declared the heir-apparent to the English throne. Efforts were also made to win over Gavin Douglas and others of the queen's adherents to the same traitorous purpose, with promises of great personal advantages to themselves, as well as representations of the great safety and facility with which such a royal removal could be effected. It was a clumsy attempt in the early machiavelism of England, and as such it deservedly failed. Margaret represented how closely she was surrounded and watched, so that such a stealthy exit was impossible. Gavin Douglas in his answer proposed the march of an English army into Scotland for the extrication of the royal family—a plan too coarse for even the days of Edward Longshanks or William the Conqueror, but without which he saw no means of conveying the queen and princes to London; and therefore he wisely concluded (laughing quietly perhaps the while) that the whole project should be abandoned. It fell to the ground accordingly, and left no trace of its existence, except those letters in the state paper collection of the period which have been published in our

¹ Lesley, p. 101; Pitscottie, 123; Letters of Lord Dacre to the English Council in State Paper Collection.

² Lesley; Letters of Sir James Inglis to Williamson; Pitscottie.

own day to stamp the memory of its designers with lasting infamy.

Amidst the general impatience for the arrival of the Duke of Albany from France, which the present unsettled state of affairs was so well fitted to increase, those obstacles by which his coming had been hindered were now completely removed. A peace had been established between France and England. Louis XII. died, and was succeeded by Francis I.; and in the peace which was still continued between the two kingdoms the Scots were included, if they were willing to accept it. This they were induced to do, notwithstanding their reluctance, by the solicitations of Francis I. and Albany, and no further obstacle remained to the duke's entrance into the management of the affairs of Scotland. He accordingly set sail from France in regal splendour, being accompanied by eight ships, supposed to be the remains of the Scottish navy sent to that country, and landed at Dumbarton on the 18th of May, 1515. On the following day he repaired to Glasgow, being attended by a train of the Scottish lords of the west, and afterwards to Edinburgh, which he reached on the 26th, and where he was welcomed "by sundry farces and good plays made by the burghesses of the town to his honour and praise." He was also cordially received by Margaret, although his arrival was the termination of her own authority.¹ Everything gave promise that the sanguine hopes which the nation had formed of his government would be amply fulfilled. But although so closely related to the royal house, and so high in favour at the French court, he had few of those qualities which were necessary for his difficult office. He knew little of Scotland and showed no desire to have his ignorance enlightened. In habits, affections, and manners, as well as birth, he was a Frenchman, and could not endure the coarse fashions of the Scottish court and nobility, which contrasted so unfavourably with the luxury and refinements of those of France. Such was even his French vivacity, that when thwarted in argument he would hurl his bonnet into the fire—a mode of reasoning strangely at variance with that of his countrymen, and which could only excite their wonder or contempt. His intellect, also, notwithstanding his foreign experience and high reputation, was either so limited or so formed upon a foreign model, that while the Scottish nobles soon learned to laugh at him he was pronounced by such shrewd judges as Wolsey and the Earl of Surrey a "furious wilful fool," and a coward to boot. Even his political influence had already been undermined through

the arts of Henry and his ministers; and the English party in Scotland, by which he was certain to be opposed and thwarted, had during his twelve months' detention in France increased from an insignificant germ into a power that was formidable both from its numbers and influence.

Undeterred, however, by the strength and influence of this English party the first measures of the regent were employed for its suppression, while his mode of proceeding was calculated to irritate rather than subdue. He threw into prison Lord Drummond, the maternal grandfather of the Earl of Angus and governor of Stirling Castle, under the charge that this old lord, about a year previously, had smote the Lion herald on the breast when he brought a message from the lords who were favourable to the recall of Albany from France to the queen-regent.² He afterwards committed to close custody, in the tower of the castle of St. Andrews, Gavin Douglas, who, independently of his high character and accomplishments, was uncle of the Earl of Angus, because the bishop had solicited from the pope a confirmation of his appointment by the queen to that see in the castle of which he was confined a close prisoner. Forman was now the Archbishop of St. Andrews and principal adviser of the Duke of Albany as well as the chief adherent of the French faction and its interests. The queen interposed to obtain the liberation of Drummond and Douglas, which she besought with tears; but the duke was deaf to her solicitations and treated them with indifference.³ This haughtiness became the more alarming when Albany proceeded to the attempt of obtaining the personal guardianship of the young princes into his own hand. Margaret trembled at the prospect. The Duke of Albany was the son of him who had branded his own brother and sovereign, James III., as a bastard; and who could tell whether his son might not entertain the same idea of the illegitimacy of the royal race and hope to set it aside in his own favour? Before the regent's arrival, also, the possibility of his obtaining the guardianship of the young princes had often been contemplated, and a parallel drawn betwixt his situation and that of Richard III. of England, who under similar temptations had caused his young nephews, the sons of Edward IV., to be secretly murdered in the Tower of London.

When matters were ripe for the attempt the Duke of Albany laid before the parliament his proposal to detach the young king and his brother from their mother's keeping and transfer

¹ Lesley, p. 102.

² Lesley, p. 102; Letters of Margaret and Dacre to the Council, Aug. 1515.

³ Ibid.

them to his own. It could be made a national as well as a party question, for as long as the princes continued under their mother's tuition they might be reared up in English predilections that would be unfavourable to the national independence. The late tampering, also, of Henry with Margaret to withdraw herself and her children into England would have proved a conclusive argument had the fact been known; but it is probable that such a correspondence as that which Williamson had conducted about the matter had been too closely kept to be more than merely suspected. The parliament which Albany called for the occasion seems to have been persuaded that the mother's further custody of her children was no longer advisable; and eight lords were appointed by lot, out of whom the duke selected four who were to be presented to the queen, among which number she might reject one; and the three lords thus remaining were to have the keeping of the persons of James V. and his brother, independently of the queen and only subject to the authority of parliament. But it is evident that Albany, both as regent and elector of these lords, would have a voice potential in the disposal of these royal pupils and the proceedings of their tutors. When all had been thus arranged and decided the four lords repaired from the parliament to the castle of Edinburgh to claim their youthful wards, the streets being filled with crowds who had heard of the proceeding and assembled to witness the scene. On approaching the castle the gates were thrown open and Margaret appeared at the entrance in the full pride of the Tudors, holding by the hand the child-king, James V., while behind her stood the nurse with the Duke of Ross in her arms, and near her were the Earl of Angus and his attendants. Before the lords and spectators could recover from this unwonted sight Margaret exclaimed in an authoritative, trumpet-like tone, "Stand! declare the cause of your coming!" The lords declared their errand; but again the loud voice of the queen exclaimed in reply, "Let down the portcullis!" The huge iron mass descended at the word, and an impregnable barrier was suddenly interposed between the astonished lords and the queen, who thus addressed them through the grating: "This castle is part of my enfeoffment; it was committed to me as sole governess by the late king, my husband; and to no mortal shall I yield such an important command!" With these words she strode away, leaving the lords gazing at the iron rampart and at each other. Even Angus himself seems to have been daunted at this bold display of his youthful partner, for which, owing to the shortness of the time, there might not have been opportunity to prepare

him; and he was uneasy at the thought that by his seeming participation in this refusal to the authority of parliament he had subjected himself to the penalties of treason, which his wife, as a mother, might incur if she so pleased without involving him also. He therefore caused legal instruments to be drawn up upon the spot testifying that he had counselled the surrender of the children, and that therefore the fault of the rejection could not be his.¹

Edinburgh was no longer a safe residence for the queen, where the regent and his court presided, and she therefore prudently withdrew to Stirling, her favourite place of residence, where the inhabitants were more friendly to her cause. She then sent a request to the authorities that the children might be left to her keeping, offering to support them out of her own dowry; and if this should be refused, that they might be committed to the care of the Earls of Angus and Home, the earl-marischal, and Sir Robert Lauder of the Bass—all of them in the interests of England and corresponding with Henry's agents; but these offers were merely made to gain time, as she knew that they would be rejected. The dilemma in which the Duke of Albany was now placed was a ludicrous one, and its ridiculous character was heightened by the nature of his attempts to remove it. He would now make war against the mother in form, and her children should be the spoils and trophies of his victory! He mustered the whole military force of Edinburgh for the purpose of besieging the queen in her stronghold, and he sent orders to the Lords Borthwick and Ruthven in Stirling to beleaguer the castle and prevent all provisions from entering into it. But this was nothing compared with the injunction which he sent to the Earl of Angus, now in his own shire, commanding him on his allegiance to repair to Stirling with his military retainers and besiege his own wife in her place of protection, and that, too, when she had the near prospect of making him a happy father. To this irregular mode of martial coercion it is unnecessary to add that Angus gave no compliance. The duke also issued a proclamation against all who continued to remain in the castle of Stirling, denouncing them as traitors to be visited with the forfeiture of life and goods. And further to weaken the queen's interests by oppressing her adherents he resolved to arrest Sir George Douglas, the brother of Angus, at that time in Edinburgh, and ordered the Earl of Home, now provost of the city, to execute the odious commission. But

¹ Letter of Dacre to the Council, 1st Aug. 1515, quoted by Pinkerton, *History of Scotland*, vol. ii. pp. 140, 141.

that proud noble, who knew that the order had no sanction of parliament, which had been previously dissolved, gave for answer that such an arrest belonged to a herald and not to him. Apprehensive, however, of the consequences of his refusal, Home fled with only a single attendant by night to Newark on the Border, and Sir George Douglas at the same time made his escape to the Merse. And now the gallant Albany took the field at the head of an army of seven thousand men to besiege a helpless pregnant woman who had none with her but her attendants, and no defence but unmanned walls and untrodden sally-ports; for the regent's previous proclamation had emptied the place of every man who could wear a corselet or wield a partisan. As soon as the roar of trumpets demanded a surrender Margaret put into the hands of James V. the keys of the fortress, which he could scarcely carry, and at her signal the royal child delivered them to the Duke of Albany. And thus on the present occasion was Stirling Castle won, which had sustained so many gallant sieges and been the scene of such transcendent passages of chivalry. The regent gave the young king and the Duke of Ross to the keeping of the earl-marischal and the Lords Borthwick and Fleming, with the castle of Stirling for their residence, which he garrisoned with seven hundred men; as for Margaret, she was conducted to Edinburgh and placed in a sort of honourable captivity, where the attendants assigned to her were also spies upon her proceedings.¹

These movements, so subversive of the interests of the English party, could not occur without appeals for aid from England; and the Earl of Home, who had fortified himself in Fast Castle, was enabled, from his neighbourhood to the Border, to enter into close communication with Lord Dacre. But although the Earl of Angus had arrived in Teviotdale for the purpose of concerting measures with these two unscrupulous plotters, he was considered as either too patriotic or too young and inexperienced to be taken into their confidence. The regent in the meantime, having thus far humbled the queen and her husband, thought the time had come for detaching them from the cause of England and securing them to his own. He accordingly offered to aid and protect them in all their just quarrels and appeals, and to restore to the queen all her jointure lands which had slipped from her possession during the late commotions, by which she was reduced to poverty, if they on their part would consent to the proceedings of

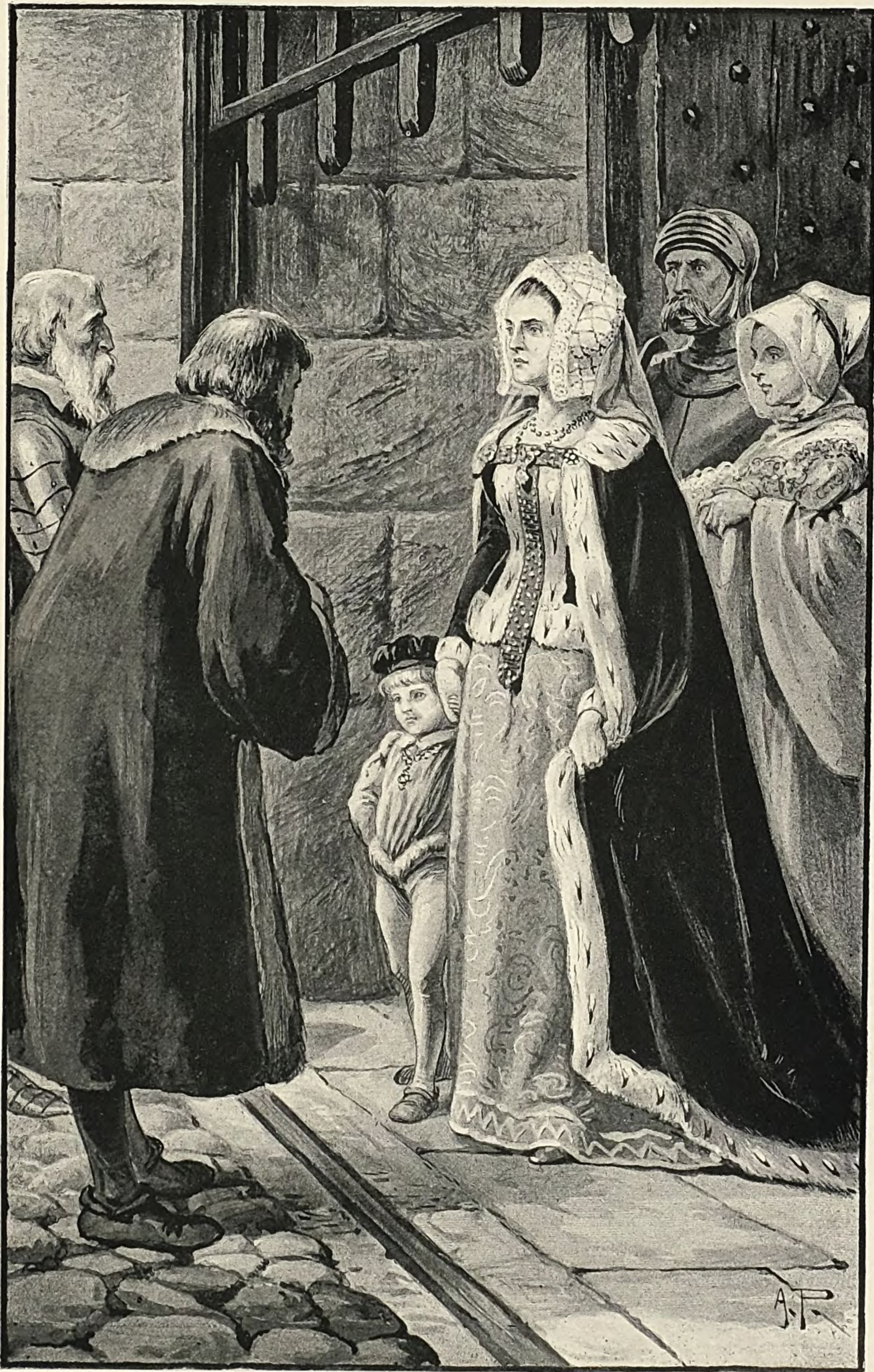
his government and seek no aid from other countries, especially from England, without the consent of the regent and the three estates of parliament. But Margaret was not yet sufficiently humbled, and after refusing these conditions she made a merit of her refusal by transmitting them to Lord Dacre. As for Home, the regent would show him as little favour as he had merited, and he sent him a peremptory command to leave the kingdom without offering any conditions—a sentence of banishment which drove that nobleman into more treasonable designs of reprisal. He wrote to Dacre for the aid of an English force, assuring him that Scotland now lay completely open to invasion, and Dacre applied to King Henry recommending the advice. War, indeed, between the regent and Home had already commenced on the Border; and Home Castle, the principal residence of the earl, having been taken by Albany's troops, was speedily recaptured by its owner and razed to the ground, that it might no longer shelter his enemies. At the same time he obtained possession of the strong castle of Blacater, about five miles to the west of Berwick, which was held for the Duke of Albany.

Amidst these changes Margaret, who had remained a month in the castle of Edinburgh, was weary of her constrained residence and desirous to escape. Though an English princess and Queen of Scotland, she was now reduced to poverty in consequence of the alienation of her revenues; and she was within six weeks of the period of her confinement, which she scarcely could wish to occur apart from her friends and while she was held in a state of bondage. She sent letters to Dacre announcing her grievances and her purpose of escape, and a ring to Henry her brother, in token that her resolution was confirmed. Dacre advised that she should in this case make the castle of Blacater her abode, which was so nigh the English border as to ensure her safety, while, being still within Scotland, she could not thereby forfeit her rights as if she had fled from the kingdom. Her plan of escape as detailed in her letter was both subtle and daring. She would quietly retire to Linlithgow, which town was included in her dower; and after staying a night or two there she proposed to depart by stealth with her husband and four or five servants, who were ignorant of her design. Within two or three miles of the town she was to be met by Lord Home at the head of forty armed men to conduct her to Blacater; but should any obstacle prevent her egress from Linlithgow he was to burn some village or town, the property of Albany, to give his expedition the appearance of a mere feudal

¹ Dacre's Letters to the Council in August 1st and 7th, Lesley, 103.

QUEEN MARGARET, WIDOW OF JAMES IV.,
DEFIES THE NOBLES.

As Queen Margaret of Scotland, widow of the king who was killed at Flodden, was sister to Henry VIII. of England, it was thought by the Scottish Parliament that she would be influenced in political affairs by her intriguing brother. They determined, therefore, to place her children,—the eldest of whom was heir to the crown,—beyond the reach of this foreign bias, and with that end they sent three lords to Edinburgh Castle in order to remove these royal wards. *The Queen, with her two children and attendants, met the deputies in the Castle gate, and asked the occasion of their coming.* They told their errand; at which the Queen ordered the portcullis to be dropped, while from behind that barrier she roundly defied the Parliament, and haughtily refused to surrender her children.



ALFRED PEARSE.

QUEEN MARGARET, WIDOW OF JAMES IV., DEFIES THE NOBLES
AT THE GATE OF EDINBURGH CASTLE, AND REFUSES TO SURRENDER HER CHILDREN (A.D. 1515).

or Border foray. This plan appears to have succeeded in all its parts, for she reached Blacater Castle in safety. Albany was dismayed at her departure, and endeavoured to recall her with conciliatory promises; and when these were ineffectual he threatened to reduce her by a siege. Nor was this to be an idle threat. Availing himself of the strong national partiality for a war against England he was soon at the head of an army of forty thousand men. But still no hostile collision between the two kingdoms was to be apprehended; for while Albany protested that his operations were only for the suppression of the national disturbances and were in no case to be extended to England, Henry knew that the term of alliance between Scotland and France had expired, and was reluctant to occasion its renewal by hostile proceedings against the Scots, although the interests of his sister were at stake. Thus Albany was enabled to advance to the Border without molestation or obstacle. Disappointed in his hope of aid Home fled across the Border into England, being soon after followed by the queen and the Earl of Angus, while Albany finished his expedition by destroying the castle that had sheltered them, after which he dismissed his army. Margaret having entered her native country in safety, was delivered a few days after of Margaret Douglas, mother of the unfortunate Darnley and grandmother of James VI., whose birth from the royal house of Tudor was thus doubly confirmed for the inheritance of the English throne.¹

The Earls of Angus and Home having by their flight placed themselves beyond Albany's reach, the latter now resolved to proceed against the Earl of Arran, who only a few days previous had signed with these lords a bond or compact such as is often to be found in Scottish history. In this they agreed to exert their uttermost in delivering the young king and his brother from suspicious hands, to assist each other in their common enterprises, and to make no agreement with the regent except by their mutual consent, and that of their kin, friends, and retainers.² Albany now took possession of the castles of the Earl of Arran and had advanced to Hamilton, the original patrimony and seat of the family, when he was met at the gate of the mansion by the earl's mother, the daughter of James II.—that princess whose romantic history and early distresses had been so well fitted to awaken the national sympathy. She now made lowly submission to the regent in behalf

of her son; and Albany, nurtured at the court of France, could not be insensible to her appeal. He released the earl from the penalties of treason on condition that he should return to his allegiance; and the weak, versatile Arran gave his bond to the winds and swore himself the liegeman of the regent and his rule.³ But no such courtesy was shown to the mother of the Earl of Home, whom Albany confined a prisoner for six weeks in the castle of Dunbar because she had been kind to Queen Margaret in her afflictions; and Home, in revenge, seized the Lion king-at-arms on the Border, and kept him as a hostage for his mother's safety.⁴ While this anarchical state of the Scottish government was mixed with contentions which were debated with weapons of war in the streets of Edinburgh, an event occurred that tended to shake what little public confidence was still reserved for the Duke of Albany. The infant Duke of Ross died in the castle of Stirling on the 18th of December, 1515.⁵ Henry VIII. had tried to get this young prince at least into his possession, by which he might have further embroiled the affairs of Scotland, or even have set up the child as a rival to his elder brother; and Albany had acted wisely and rightly in preventing such a dangerous guardianship. But it was now remembered that to effect his purpose he had rudely withdrawn the child from its mother and placed it under keepers of his own selection. It would have been strange if no rumours of foul play had been circulated on this occasion; and the queen, the Douglasses, and their faction reported that the Duke of Ross had been poisoned by the directions of Albany, to destroy the chances of his being carried into England.⁶

The events which were now taking place in France, by affecting the interest of England, influenced those of Scotland also. The young French king, Francis I., by his defeat of the Swiss in the terrible battle of Marignano, had obtained possession of the whole of the Milanese; and Henry VIII., who saw in this gallant successful sovereign a rival by whom his personal and political influence might be eclipsed, was already contemplating the renewal of his wars on the Continent. But in such an event a lasting peace with Scotland would be indispensable, and the overtures made to that effect at the commencement of the year 1516 were receiving a more cordial attention than could have been expected. The troubles of Albany,

¹ Letters in State Paper Collection.

² Letters of Dr. Magnus and Lord Dacre to King Henry VIII., 18th October, 1515.

³ Lesley, p. 104.

⁴ Ibid. p. 105.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ This calumny was repeated by the queen and Gavin Douglas, but was likely used merely for political purposes. To have poisoned the infant duke while James V. was alive would have been a gratuitous cruelty.

indeed, continued to multiply so rapidly that any temporary cessation was welcome, let the ultimate end be what it might. He was again disturbed by the weak, vacillating Earl of Arran, who still hankered for the regency, and with the aid of the Earls of Lennox and Glencairn had seized and fortified the castle of Dumbarton. Although Arran once more succumbed, and was allowed to go free of punishment, these bandings of the nobles had become so frequent and so formidable that Albany regretted he had ever come to Scotland, and was only desirous for a decent opportunity to demit his government and return to France. To this resolution we may perhaps attribute the facility with which he now received back to favour his old enemies Angus and Home. These nobles, who saw that in the present political state of affairs there was no hope from the King of England, negotiated with Albany for their safe return to Scotland and the repossession of their honours and estates; and on their terms being granted they came home, and were received without question or demur. But it speaks little for their honour, and especially that of Angus, that their negotiation was conducted without the knowledge of Margaret. The queen thus unceremoniously deserted by her husband even while she was laid upon a bed of sickness, indignantly retired from Morpeth, where she had sojourned, and took refuge in her brother's court, where she was received with sympathy and welcome.¹

The truce between Scotland and England which had been in treaty at the commencement of the year was ratified on the 1st of June (1516), and was to continue for two years. But this was not enough for the purposes of Henry, who was desirous at the same time to root out the French influence in Scotland by the ejection of the Duke of Albany from the regency. His proceeding on this occasion was marked by his characteristic arrogance and impetuosity, through which his best-laid plans were frequently defeated. In spite of the truce, and on the very day that it was signed, he caused a letter to be presented to the three estates of the Scottish parliament, insisting upon nothing less than the dismissal of the duke from the office of regent as one too nearly allied to the royal house to be a disinterested and safe guardian to their young king. The demand was a national, universal insult, and as such it was indignantly answered, and with edifying unanimity; the enemies as well as the supporters of Albany adhibiting their names to

the missives in reply. The duke, they said, had been called to office by their authority; and as for the young king, he was safe in the keeping of trustworthy guardians. But even in spite of this recognition of his authority Albany was desirous to leave the kingdom. That unanimity was in favour of the national independence, not of himself, and he knew that as soon as the general apprehension was removed the plots of the nobles against him would be as numerous and as annoying as ever. Lord Dacre also was continuing by his intrigues to increase and multiply the disturbances in Scotland; and he boasted at this time in a letter to Wolsey of his success in creating these dissensions, and that he had four hundred Scottish outlaws in his pay, whose daily occupation was to waste, burn, and destroy. The regent was impatient to be gone, and unknown to the Scots he was negotiating with Wolsey to visit the court of England, from which, after an interview with King Henry, he might have an undisturbed passage to France. In the same spirit he applied to the French king for support in his regency, or at least for permission to return to his old French home and possessions. Emboldened perhaps by this resolution to abandon office, and the impunity with which a crowning indication of his authority might be accomplished before his final departure, he ventured upon a daring act of justice, or revenge, or both, at which both friends and enemies must have been astonished. This was nothing less than the execution of the powerful Earl of Home as a traitor. That nobleman, although he had been forgiven and allowed to return to Scotland, does not appear to have renounced, according to promise, his connection with Henry and Lord Dacre: on the contrary, his correspondence with them had been renewed; and in all the troubles upon the Border, by which the regent's authority was defied and the peace of the country disturbed, the earl was supposed to be an active instigator and adviser. But his career of treachery and double-dealing was now to end. Either trusting that his share in these disturbances was unknown, or tempted by the invitations and promises of Albany, he was so rash as to visit the court, accompanied by his brother and Sir Andrew Ker of Fernyhirst. He was instantly arrested, tried, and sentenced to death for his connection with the thieves and outlaws on the Border;² and to this was added the more atrocious, though less grounded charge of treasonable conduct at Flodden and complicity in the death of the late king, who, according to one class of popular rumours, had survived the

¹ Lesley, p. 105; Letters of Dacre in April, 1516; Lodge's *Illustrations of British History*, i. 20-22.

² Lesley, *History of Scotland*, p. 107.

battle only to be assassinated by Home and his emissaries. Pursuant to his sentence the earl was publicly beheaded on the 8th of October (1516), and his brother the day after, while Ker, who was also tried and condemned, was respited from execution. After this Albany repaired to Jedburgh with a strong array of armed men, to restore peace upon the Borders; and having daunted the insurgents, he placed trustworthy rulers over these lawless districts and returned to Edinburgh.

At the first meeting of parliament after the regent's return, which assembled on the 3d of November, there was much important business to be discussed; and not the least of this was his own claim to rank as the nearest member of the royal house after James V., for the honour was contested by his step-brother, Alexander Stewart. This candidate was the elder son of the former Duke of Albany, who had fled to France in the reign of James III.; but the duke's marriage to Alexander's mother, Catherine Sinclair, daughter of the Earl of Caithness, had been proclaimed irregular on the score of consanguinity, and dissolved by parliament; and thus the regent, although the son of a second marriage, was by law entitled to the priority, a decision which was again confirmed by the present parliament.¹ Another difficulty was the adjustment of the relationship which was now to subsist between Scotland and France, occasioned by the arrival of Francis de Bordeaux, the ambassador of the French king. We know how earnestly this alliance had in former times been courted by France when in trouble, and how ungratefully it had been requited as soon as the troubles had ended. The present case was to be no exception to former precedents. Francis I. had gained the advantage over his rivals, and was at peace with them all except Henry VIII.; and to win over this single recusant was to him of greater importance than any advantage that could accrue from Scotland. Every Scottish demand therefore was distinctly and peremptorily refused. The restitution of the county of Saintonge assigned in 1428 by Charles VII. to James I. was withheld upon the plea that it was a portion of the royal demesne, and could not be alienated. No aid whatever was to be given by France to Scotland against the English king. Even the alliance between France and Scotland, which had been renewed between Duplanis, the French ambassador, and the Scottish council of regency within a year after the death of James IV., Francis I. now refused to ratify.² The hope of

French aid, upon which Albany had so securely depended, was thus struck from under him by a most unkindly blow; and amidst this increase of his difficulties he wished that both his legs and arms had been broken at the first step of his journey from France to Scotland. This, however, was an outburst of sudden impatience, and among his most confidential friends. Only one course remained for him; it was to adopt the counsel of his friend and patron, Francis, which had been privately conveyed to him; it was to withdraw to France, as the present political condition of affairs would prevent any aid from being sent to him in Scotland. He trembled to make the proposal to the parliament, and yet it must be done. Accordingly he mustered courage to announce his wish and its causes. He was desirous to have a personal conference with Francis I., and to visit his wife, whose health was impaired. The astonishment of the three estates at this proposal was followed by an indignant refusal, and every argument was adduced to make him forego his resolution. They had recognized him as the nearest heir of the throne, which he was about to abandon while its occupant was a child, and his departure from the kingdom would be a signal for the return of all that anarchy which had preceded his arrival. It would also occasion the abandonment of the alliance with France and the predominance of the English cause in Scotland. It would even hinder his resumption of the regency, as in the event of his departure he would never be allowed to revisit Scotland. They in fine adjured him to remain and to continue in office until the king had attained the age of eighteen, according to the resolution that had been made the preceding year.³ But Albany was doggedly resolute in his purpose, and at last the three estates gave a most unwilling assent, with the understanding that his absence was to last only four months, during which a council of regency was appointed, consisting of the Archbishops of St. Andrews and Glasgow, and the Earls of Huntly, Argyle, Angus, and Arran. The king was brought from Stirling to the castle of Edinburgh, and consigned to the guardianship of the earl-marischal and the Lords Erskine, Borthwick, and Ruthven, two of whom were to be in constant attendance. De la Bastie, the gallant French knight, courtier, and soldier, whom the duke had lately appointed warden of the marches, was invested with a sort of delegated authority for the maintenance of the general peace during the regent's absence, and the castles of Dunbar and Dumbarton, the principal sea approaches to the kingdom, were each

¹ Lesley, p. 108; Scotstarvet's *Calendars of Charters*.

² *Epistolæ Regum Scotorum*, i. 243-248, 249, 257.

³ Letter of Clarenceux to Wolsey, 30th Nov. 1516.

furnished with a garrison of French soldiers. Having thus adopted such precautions as might have sufficed for more than the stipulated term of absence, the Duke of Albany set sail from Dumbarton on the 7th or 8th of June, 1517, taking with him the eldest sons of many of the noblest families of Scotland as hostages of the public tranquillity.¹

Only a week after Albany had left Scotland Queen Margaret entered it. Her return had been previously negotiated by Wolsey, and the application granted by the regent and Scottish parliament, with the full restitution of her revenues and effects, and she had only waited the duke's departure to make her entrance into Scotland. She again halted at Lamberton Kirk; but under what different auspices from her first arrival there, when she came a desired and honoured bride, with the most gallant of sovereigns for her husband and a whole nation prepared to welcome her! Still, however, she was received as a queen by the Earls of Angus, Morton, and other noblemen, and by De la Bastie. As that frequent visitant of Scottish cities, the pestilence, had broken out in Edinburgh, the young king had been removed for safety to Craigmillar Castle, and because suspicions still remained that Margaret might attempt to convey him to England, her visits to her son were brief and carefully watched.² Her arrival, however, brought little increase of strength to the English party in Scotland, about whose interests she now appeared indifferent; and for this lukewarmness the heartless conduct of her brother Henry, and his inattention to her welfare while pursuing his projects against Scotland, are a sufficient explanation. In the meantime Albany showed no such remissness about the French faction, with which he was so closely identified, and upon his return to France he laboured to perfect that alliance between the two kingdoms which late events had threatened to interrupt. He was successful, and the treaty of Rouen was the consequence, upon which all the subsequent important connections between France and Scotland were founded. The chief articles on the present occasion were for their mutual defence against England, with a specification of the aid which each was to furnish in the event of the other being invaded. In the one case France was to send to Scotland 2200 well-armed men and a hundred thousand crowns; in the other, Scotland was to send to France six thousand soldiers; and should either kingdom be invaded, the other was to effect a diversion in its favour by an attack on England.³

Although there was now little prospect of

Albany's speedy return to Scotland, the peace of the kingdom seems to have been successfully maintained with one melancholy exception. It will be remembered that the duke at his departure had intrusted Darcie de la Bastie with such powers as made him a sort of deputy-regent. This undefined office the knight both faithfully and vigorously exercised for the suppression of public disorders, in which, as a foreigner, he was able to proceed without favour or feud; and in such a spirit of impartiality he had thrown Stirling of Keir and his accomplices into prison for their attempt to assassinate Meldrum of Binns—the Squire Meldrum of the chivalrous romance of Sir David Lindsay. But the circumstance of his being a foreigner also made him more envied and hated, as well as more defenceless against the prevalent odium. Above all, his office of warden of the Border exposed him to the rancour of his powerful neighbours the Homes, whose chiefs had been wont to hold that office, and whose last earl had been lately executed as a traitor. The duty of revenge in this case devolved upon Home of Wedderburn, and this he resolved to wreak, not upon Albany, who was now beyond his reach, but upon the warden, the devoted adherent of the duke and supplanter in office of the Earl of Home. An opportunity also could easily be found, as De la Bastie on the rumour of any public disturbance was instantly in the saddle, and on his way to suppress it. It was on their knowledge of this fact that Wedderburn and the Border barons, his accomplices, acted. Having thrown a garrison of their men into the Tower of Langton they pretended to besiege it; and on learning of the event, which had a serious appearance, De la Bastie hurried from his fortress of Dunbar accompanied by a few French knights, to quell the insurrection. But before he had reached Langton he fell into an ambuscade, by whom his attendants were overpowered and slain. De la Bastie cut his way through the crowd of fierce Borderers, and set spurs to his good horse, trusting to outstrip his pursuers; but being ignorant of the country he was entangled in a marsh, and there mercilessly killed by his enemies. To add to the barbarity of this savage and cowardly deed Home of Wedderburn cut off the head of his victim, hung it in triumph by its long curling locks to his saddle-bow, and on entering Dunse exposed it on the market-cross of the town.⁴

Offended with this lawless conduct, which required a strong arm to punish it, the lords of the regency looked round them for an avenger and successor to the unfortunate foreigner. In

¹ Lesley, p. 109.

² Ibid.

³ Harleian MSS. 1244.

⁴ Lesley, p. 110; Pitscottie, pp. 129, 130.

this case the Earl of Angus would likely have been selected, but that his connection with the family of Home was known, and his loyalty somewhat doubtful. They therefore passed him over, and to his still greater indignation chose the Earl of Arran, who was appointed not only warden of the Border, but provost of the city of Edinburgh. The anger of Angus was not likely to be alleviated by the first proceedings of the new warden and provost, who threw George Douglas, Angus's brother, and Mark Ker into prison as accomplices in De la Bastie's murder. A parliament was then assembled at Edinburgh on the 19th of February, 1517, for the trial of the murderers; and there Home of Wedderburn, his three brothers, and several of his accomplices were condemned for the slaughter of De la Bastie. To carry the sentence of the parliament into execution Arran levied an army, and with a train of artillery proceeded to the Merse to besiege the culprits in their strongholds if they refused to submit. But no such resistance was offered; on the contrary, the keys of the castles of Home, Langton, and Wedderburn were surrendered to Arran at his approach, who garrisoned them with his own soldiers. But beyond this submission we hear of no punishment inflicted on the offenders, who were either too powerful to be dealt with according to law, or whose surrender was received as a sufficient penalty.¹

Amidst all these disturbances the absence of the Duke of Albany was continued, and as time passed onward he seemed to become more reluctant to return to Scotland. Of this indeed he now gave decisive proof by writing to Queen Margaret, advising her to obtain the permission of the nobility and resume her office of regent. But she had other purposes to accomplish, the chief of which was to obtain the regency for her husband, whose desertion of her in England she had pardoned, and whose wasteful extravagance she endeavoured to supply by the sale of her plate and jewels. But the Earl of Angus had already forfeited the confidence of the principal nobles, and he now made his chance of advancement more desperate by wounding the affections of the queen. His profligacy was notorious, and his conjugal infidelity was signalized by his carrying off a lady whom he established in Douglasdale as his paramour, and by whom he had a daughter, afterwards married to Patrick Lord Ruthven. This insult roused Margaret's indignation, and she now resolved to be divorced from her unfaithful husband, while the chief nobility, who saw in such a step the chance of reducing Angus to their own level, encouraged

her in her purpose. But as it would have been a death-blow to the designs of her brother, Henry, and the strength of the English party in Scotland, he sent Chatsworth, a friar, with letters to his sister, and with a commission to reason with her on the subject. This the friar did in that full measure of loftiness and fierceness which preceded the downfall of his church and order, by assailing her with Latin precepts and texts of Scripture, denouncing her purpose as a "damnable delusion," reproaching her for her unnatural cruelty to her daughter, whom she was about to make fatherless,—and suggesting in no gentle terms that her own fidelity as a wife would scarcely endure a close scrutiny. Margaret was silent and confounded though not convinced, and the effect of such an exposure was to make her more regardless about her trespasses of this nature, as they were already discovered, and would be certain to be published abroad. In the meantime it was necessary to pacify her brother, and delay the season of public exposure by patching up a reconciliation with her husband, and this she effected notwithstanding the dissuaves of the lords of the French party, who found it their interest to keep the pair at variance.²

There were now few incidents of a public nature in Scotland beyond those we have mentioned, so that the four years' absence of Albany is almost a blank in the national history. The principal proceedings were those silent intrigues of Henry for reducing the Scottish nobles, and through them the whole nation, to a state of vassalage, and the noisy feuds and outbreaks of the Earl of Angus, who was still the chief of the English faction. It was also a formidable indication of the growing strength of the cause that this fearless unscrupulous leader, the representative of the ancient Douglasses, and whose power and resources were unequalled in the Scottish aristocracy, was also acquiring a character commensurate with his formidable means. His eventful life had taught him experience, his ambition had concentrated his purposes and plan of action; and without renouncing the faults he had abandoned the follies of his youth, and was manifesting such talents as neither his friends nor his enemies had given him the credit of possessing. His great aim was to obtain the chief direction of affairs, let whoever might be regent, and of this he proceeded to give the most daring and unequivocal proofs. Thus in 1519, when peace was renewed between France and England, the Scots were to be included if they consented to

¹ Lesley, p. 111.

² Lesley, p. 112; Caligula, b. i. 275; Letters of Dacre to Wolsey, 1518.

the terms; and to obtain this consent Francis I. applied by his ambassadors, who were referred to the three estates in parliament, by whom alone such questions could be decided. The terms were agreed to at Stirling, and the truce between Scotland and England was prolonged to the 30th of November, 1520. But Angus and his party were indignant that the ambassadors, instead of recognizing them as the rulers of the kingdom, had applied to the parliament, and on this account they refused to attend it. But this was not all, for while the ambassadors were returning to England the earl at the head of a numerous armed retinue overtook them at Caerlaverock, and dismayed them with a sharp rebuke for their disrespectful neglect. After this the earl resolved to appoint by his own authority a provost to the city of Edinburgh—a situation of high political importance, but which was conferred by the suffrage of the state authorities. Arran had filled the office and was in hope to be re-elected, but on repairing from Dalkeith to the capital he and his friends found the city gates shut against them, and Archibald Douglas, the uncle of Angus, installed in the provostship. An attempt was made to obtain entrance into the town by force, and in the conflict that ensued the party of Arran were defeated and several persons killed and wounded, for which, not long after, Gawin, a carpenter, who had headed the city rioters, was slain by the truculent Sir James Hamilton, usually named the Bastard of Arran. Of equal or still greater atrocity were the outrages of the principal adherents of Angus. Thus Home of Wedderburn, the brother-in-law of the earl and murderer of Bastie, assassinated the Prior of Coldingham and six men of his family, after which William Douglas, the brother of Angus, took forcible possession of the priory.¹

These quarrels, and others equally sanguinary but still more unintelligible, predominated during the year 1520; and while France and England occasionally interfered, it was only for the purpose of turning these disturbances to their own account. Such was especially the case with France, and her negotiations at this period with Scotland will make the subject more intelligible. Toward the close of the above-mentioned year, when Francis I. was at peace with Henry VIII., it was desirable for his own interests that no interruption of the general amity should proceed from Scotland. The French king, therefore, sent an embassy thither for the purpose of recommending temperate and gentle measures, while to make the application more effectual one of the ambassadors was Robert Stewart,

Lord of Aubigny, a relation of the royal house and captain of the Scottish archer guards of the King of France; the other was Duplanis, a doctor of laws, and well known to the Scots from his previous arrivals among them in a similar capacity. Their mission was to recommend the maintenance of peace among themselves during the minority of James V., a prolongation of the truce with England, and the discontinuance of those applications which had of late been in progress for the recall of the Duke of Albany to Scotland, representing that Henry was opposed to such a measure and would go to war with France if it was effected. But soon after there were symptoms of a renewal of war between France and England, in the event of which the alliance with Scotland would be of considerable account to the French; and influenced by this consideration, Francis was no longer averse to the Scots being at war with their neighbours or desirous to hinder the Duke of Albany's return. While these great potentates were thus using Scotland for their own purposes another magnate of inferior consequence was at work in the same selfish spirit; this was Queen Margaret, whom the haughty treatment of her brother and the heartless conduct of her husband had alienated from the interests of England and the party in Scotland which they supported. Her resentment was also aggravated by the refusal of Wolsey and Dacre to furnish those supplies of money which her necessities required, and which she doubtless thought her political services in the cause of England had amply deserved. She would now turn to the interests of France, whose king was both rich and bountiful, and to her old rival, the Duke of Albany, an alliance with whom would restore her old preponderance in Scotland and make her resentment worth deprecating. She privately sent overtures to Albany, who willingly received them, and he agreed to return to Scotland and resume the regency as soon as Francis I. would give permission to that effect. It was added also by Wolsey, after intelligence of this treaty had reached him, that closer bonds were involved in this agreement than those we have already specified. It was alleged that a treaty of marriage was also in agitation between Albany and Margaret, the duke's wife being at this time sickly and not likely to live long, and that in prosecution of this unseemly scheme he was already exerting his influence at the court of Rome to procure a divorce of the queen from the Earl of Angus.

The course of events did not long delay the return of the Duke of Albany to his regency. The veering and impetuous Henry VIII., under

¹ Lesley, pp. 113, 114.

the selfish instigation of Wolsey, whose wishes and hopes were fixed on attaining the popedom and who moulded his master into every project that would make for such a purpose, had now concluded an alliance with Charles V. for the invasion and dismemberment of the French dominions; and Francis I., menaced by such a dangerous alliance, was glad to turn to Scotland and adopt every expedient to

strengthen his influence in that quarter. He therefore seconded the proposals of Albany, and even urged his departure. Thus commissioned the duke set sail from France, and arrived in the Gareloch, in Lennox, on the 19th of November, 1521, after an absence of five years from the kingdom, instead of the four short months to which he had originally been limited.

CHAPTER IV.

REIGN OF JAMES V. (1521-1528).

Proceedings of the Duke of Albany on his second arrival in Scotland—Statements of the malcontent lords against him and the queen to Henry VIII.—Similar statements from the Bishop of Dunkeld—The queen's reply to them—Henry's complaint and charges to the Scottish parliament—Its indignant answer—The Earl of Angus seeks permission to return to Scotland—He is obliged to submit to a temporary exile—Trivial hostilities of the English against Scotland—Their increase into open warfare—Great preparations of Albany to invade England—Their inglorious result—The duke again leaves Scotland—Embassy of Henry VIII. after Albany's departure—Inroads of English armies into Scotland—Albany returns to Scotland with foreign aid—He buys over the queen and nobles to his party—He attempts a fresh invasion of England—His army refuses to cross the Tweed—His unsuccessful siege of the castle of Wark—He retreats and disbands his army—He leaves Scotland for the last time—The queen assumes the chief management of the government—She causes James V. to be proclaimed in his nonage—Opposition to the measure silenced—Character of James V. at this period—Ascendency of the queen and the English party—Her double-dealing with England and France—She seeks to be divorced from Angus that she may marry a third husband—Her increasing unpopularity—Angus becomes head of the English party—His return to Scotland—He seeks in vain a reconciliation with the queen—His night attack on Edinburgh—The queen and James retire from Holyrood to the castle—Ascendency of the power of Angus and Beaton over that of the queen and the Earl of Arran—Fruitless application of the latter to France and England—Angus and his party assume the guardianship of the young king—The queen obliged to submit—Duplicity of her negotiations with the contending parties—Arran commences a civil war by her desire—His attempt suppressed—The queen's unpopularity with all parties—She obtains a divorce from Angus and marries Henry Stewart—Intrigues of the Earl of Angus to increase his power—He obtains the recognition of James's majority that he may rule in his name—He raises the power of the Douglasses to its old pre-eminence—Impatience of James under their coercion—He applies to Scott of Buccleugh for liberation—Scott's unsuccessful attempt to free him—The Earl of Lennox raises an army for the king's deliverance—James brought unwillingly into the field—Lennox defeated and slain—Attempted assassination of Sir James Hamilton—Commencement of the Reformation—Martyrdom of Patrick Hamilton—Ingenious plan of James to escape from the Douglasses—Its success—The Douglasses prohibited from approaching the royal presence—They find that their power is at an end.

The length of the Duke of Albany's absence from Scotland, and the critical period at which he had returned, made his second arrival apparently as welcome as the first. On passing from Gareloch to Linlithgow he was met by the queen with an ardour which a mere political alliance could scarcely have inspired; and their frequent closetings together, not only by day but also by night, were thought to have reference to other purposes than those of the government of the kingdom. On arriving in Edinburgh the duke was welcomed by the principal nobles and barons, while the Earl of Angus and his party, who had previously ruled in the capital, were fain to escape to the Borders. On

the following day the regent and queen, attended by the chief officers of state, repaired to the castle of Edinburgh, in which the young king had his residence; and on the captain of the fortress delivering the keys to the regent, he gallantly laid them at the feet of Margaret, who, in turn, restored them to the duke, thus intimating that he was the fittest person to whom the guardianship of her son could be intrusted. Thus invested with every kind of authority, the duke deposed the provost and magistrates of Edinburgh who had been placed in office by Angus, and elected others in their room, after which he summoned a parliament to meet on the 26th of December (1521). The Earl of

Angus, his brother the prior of Coldingham, the lairds of Dalhousie, Cambusnethan, and Langton, with others of the Home and Douglas faction, were there summoned to answer for their share in the late disturbances and the murder of De la Bastie, and for their non-appearance had the penalties of forfeiture proclaimed against them. It is piteous to find a man of genius and learning such as the age could scarcely have matched, and who was worth a whole host of such iron-headed barons, mixed up in their quarrels, where he could only play the part of an underling, and on their failure have to share in their punishment. But so it was, and among the fugitives was Gavin Douglas, Bishop of Dunkeld, who fled to England, and there died neglected and in exile.¹

From the letters of this period addressed to Henry VIII. both by the malcontent lords and the wily Lord Dacre we have a strange picture of the state of affairs in Scotland; and were but half of their reports true, we would mingle with our pity for such a land an angry feeling of condemnation for having permitted the growth of such offences and tolerating such offenders. But while some of them are false, others are evidently exaggerated to suit the purposes of diplomacy, and they serve rather to show the nature of the political rumours of the period, and the use that was made of them, than the actual state of the government and nation. The statements of the malcontents—Angus, Home, and the rest—are addressed to the King of England at the close of the year 1521, and are dated from the Kirk of Steyle, a place on the Scottish border of which modern topography has taken no notice. The strongest, the bitterest, and most easily substantiated charge was the nature of the intercourse between the queen-dowager and the Duke of Albany—a connection of such a nature, and so shamelessly conducted, that neither friend nor enemy seems to have doubted of its criminality. They then advert to the dangerous consequences of this connection in relation to the safety of the young king; and entreat Henry to demand that Albany shall have no appointment of any officials who are to attend upon the royal person, and that none of his appointment shall approach within thirty miles of the royal residence. As they had shown their devotedness to the cause of the English party and the interests of the English king, by pledging themselves on oath not to treat with the regent without his (Henry's) consent, they request him in return to hold no negotia-

tion with the regent without due attention to their interests. Finally, they desire to know what support they may expect from him if Albany should usurp the throne of Scotland. Dacre's collections of political gossip transmitted to his master, with which he endeavoured to corroborate their statements, and which he had no doubt mainly received from themselves, were still more specific and acrimonious. He speaks of a report in Scotland, that Albany would ascend the throne by the death of the young sovereign. He says that the queen had endeavoured to obtain the consent of the earl, her husband, to a divorce, by offering him Ettrick Forest, which was part of her dowry, and worth 1200 Scottish marks per annum. He then touches upon the alliance between Margaret and the regent, which he pronounces both shameful and adulterous, and by this he doubtless touched the pride of her brother, and raised his resentment to the highest pitch. The means by which Albany endeavoured to secure his power were then disclosed by Dacre. He said that through his kinsman, the pontiff, the regent's church influence was so great that the benefices falling vacant in the third or papal month were in his gift, and that he bestowed them upon the sons of peers who were not churchmen; that all the abbeys were in his gift, which he disposed of in like manner; and that he had given to Lord Fleming's son the abbey of Holyrood, which was worth £1400 annually. But besides bestowing he also sold benefices, by which traffic he had gained in money to the amount of 40,000 marks Scotch. It was dangerous to Scotland, or at least to Henry's interests there, that a Frenchman should not only have the chief rule in that kingdom, but be in a condition to usurp the throne; and he advises that matters should be kept in their present uncertainty, by harassing the Scottish borders with frequent inroads, by bridling them with English garrisons, and by keeping them in constant alarm and insecurity with rumours of impending war and invasion. In this way Scotland would be as effectually distressed as by keeping a large army in the field to act against it.

As if all these heavy charges against the administration of the Scottish regent had not been enough, they were aggravated by a memorial which the Bishop of Dunkeld, commissioned by the Douglasses for the purpose, presented to the English court at the commencement of the following year; and if the translator of Virgil is worthy of credence, it was time that Albany should be displaced from his government. After showing that the duke had no estate in Scotland to answer for his wasteful expenditure of the public money, and that he

¹ Lesley, pp. 116-117; Letter of Angus to Dunkeld, Caligula, b. vi. 204.

was the vassal, subject, stipendiary, and knight of France, whose commands he was bound to obey, the bishop proceeded to specify the fraudulent profusion that characterized the regent's proceedings. He had garrisoned the royal castles of Dunbar, Inchaffray, and Dumbarton with French soldiers, to whom he allowed four times the pay of ordinary soldiers. He had sold the three large ships of the Scottish navy, which James IV. had built, to the French government for half their value, and had not only used the money as his own, but also the large sums which France had disbursed in consideration of the aid it had received from the Scots during the late war. He had even converted the royal robes of cloth of gold and rich furs, and the tapestries of purple and cramosie velvet, into dresses for his own pages, and coined the royal silver jugs into groats. Proceeding in his specification, Gavin Douglas told the particulars of the crown lands he had sold or alienated, the royal wardships in which he had trafficked, and the taxes he had imposed—all of them actions which the right of royalty itself could scarcely justify, but which he had committed by his own despotic authority. While Albany was thus so insatiate and prodigal of money, the young king was kept in such a state of destitution that he had not new doublets and hose until his natural sister, the Countess of Morton, provided them; and that when cloth of gold was sent for the purpose, his covetous keepers refused to pay the tailor. Even the death of the young Duke of Ross was brought forward as a make-weight in the offences of Albany, whom it was insinuated he had removed by poison. It had been agreed, also, at the duke's departure to France, that if he delayed his stay longer than four months he should forfeit all future claim to the regency; and finally, in a parliament held on the 21st of January, 1521, it had been resolved that his regency should terminate if he did not return by the first of the following August. But notwithstanding this decree he had not arrived in Scotland till towards the end of November, and instead of being re-elected he had seized upon the office. On all these various accounts, both of informality and maladministration, it was maintained that the Duke of Albany had forfeited the regency, and should be allowed to hold it no longer.¹

As all these evil communications so deeply involved the queen-dowager, Margaret was anxious to clear her character, and this she attempted in a long communication written to her brother Henry. In this manifesto she was

not sparing of her vituperations against the Bishop of Dunkeld, whom she declared she would deprive of the bishopric, as it had been originally her own gift. As for Albany, she said he had come to Scotland not through any application on her part, but wholly to fulfil his engagements; that had he not come, such was the troubled state of affairs that she must have left the kingdom; that so far from interfering with the young king, her son was living with her in the castle of Edinburgh; and that the duke's conduct towards her was "sober and more humble than that of any other man in Scotland," and that he even allowed her money for her maintenance out of his own resources. She then entreats that this her justification may be received and carefully considered, and that Henry would send by Clarencieux herald an intimation of his intentions to the Duke of Albany.² But nothing that Margaret could write was available for her justification, and both Henry and Wolsey spoke openly of her as the shameless concubine of the duke. Henry did, indeed, write in reply by Clarencieux, but it was with his characteristic rudeness and fierceness. After reproaching Margaret as one whose guilt was too manifest to be concealed he turned upon the regent and declared that he would drive him forth of Scotland. He accused him of having left France contrary to the knowledge of the French king, and of having instigated his sister to seek a divorce from Angus for his own flagitious purposes. He expressed his fears for the safety of his nephew, James V., and that Albany, who stood next in succession, might be tempted to remove him out of the way as had happened to other young kings under such guardianship. These and other heavy charges were not only addressed to the duke himself, but presented in Henry's name before the Scottish parliament, and the three estates were required to divest the regent of his office, with a proclamation of war as the alternative.³ But this impetuous, dictatorial spirit of Henry, as formerly, defeated its purpose and animated the Scots to endure any extremity rather than submit to such interference. They therefore repelled his accusations against the loyalty of the regent, who was the governor of their own choice, and who, far from plotting against the safety of their king, had referred all things pertaining to his guardianship to their own rule and management. "We see no appearance," they said in their answer, "why your grace should believe or give credence that our said lord-governor, who has been nourished with so great honour, and had such tender familiarity

¹ Calig. b. iii. 309.² Calig. b. vi. 208.³ Ibid. 220.

with popes and the greatest princes in Christendom, would so far neglect his fame and conscience as imagine or think any harm or displeasure to our sovereign lord's person—or to induce any princess to leave her lawful husband for his sake, or he to separate himself from his own espoused wife, being a lady so virtuous, and by whom he has so great lordships and possessions; and in good faith we firmly believe, that neither the queen's grace your sister nor yet he are, or have been minded thereto in any manner." They alluded to Albany's faithful services during his former administration, and especially, when certain treasonable persons had endeavoured to convey their young king out of Scotland—a reminiscence that must have been borne hard upon the conscience of Henry. They requested him to withdraw his faith from false intelligencers, especially the Bishop of Dunkeld, and the fugitive Scottish lords who were harboured in his dominions, to whom if he still gave credence they could not see how amity and good love could increase between their sovereign lord and his uncle, the King of England. And with regard to Henry's threat in case of their refusal they meet his arrogance with the following decisive reply: "We are resolute that ere we should consent to do so great hurt to the king our sovereign lord and commonweal of his realm, so great dishonour to ourselves, and so great wrong to our said lord-governor as to remove him forth of this realm and live in division and daily trouble among ourselves as this long time bypast we have done, he being in France—we will, with his presence, take our adventure of peace or war as shall please God to send it; assuring your grace that for the cause above specified, and others enough which we shall show in time and place, we neither may nor will, at request of your grace or any other prince, consent or suffer in any manner that our said lord-governor depart forth of this realm during the king our sovereign lord's minority and nonage. And if for this cause we happen to be invaded, what may we do but take God to our good quarrel in defence, and do as our progenitors and forebears have been constrained to do for the conservation of this realm heretofore."¹

In this answer of the Scottish parliament we read that pertinacity of purpose which was opposed to all foreign, and especially English domination. As long as the agents of Henry exerted their secret craft and distributed their master's gold they could set noble against noble and chieftain against chieftain, and secure not only the safety of their own country, but a voice

in the Scottish councils and government. But let the national pride be insulted, or the national independence threatened, and all were unanimous for war. In the meantime, while the short truce between the two kingdoms was at an end, and both were preparing for hostilities, the Earl of Angus, who hovered upon the English borders, was anxious to return to Scotland. The present state of affairs must have deprived him of what little influence he had, while a longer sojourn among the now proclaimed enemies of his country would brand him with the character of a traitor. He also feared that the sentence of forfeiture pronounced against him and his associates would be executed by the Scottish parliament as soon as the war had commenced. He therefore applied to his wife, that she might intercede in his behalf with the Duke of Albany; which Margaret did, and with success. Some transient return of her old affection, or perhaps the private consent of the earl to a divorce, may have moved her to this unexpected clemency, and Angus was freed from his sentence, on condition that he and his brother should retire to France. They went thither accordingly; and after a sojourn of two years the earl returned to Scotland a wiser, if not a better man. But this return and the effects it produced belong to a later period of our narrative.

In the meantime Henry, with every wish to make war upon the Scots, could only do it upon an insignificant scale; for not only were his treasures exhausted, and his complication with continental politics still continued, but his campaign against Luther and the reformation had commenced, which was to produce such singular results. He could do nothing more than send a small squadron of seven ships into the Forth, which picked up a few Scottish prizes in the firth and inflicted some trifling injury upon the villages on the coast. But they were encountered with such a stout resistance that they could accomplish nothing further, and as far as booty or glory went they returned as empty as they came.²

Only a short period after this paltry invasion Henry VIII. made common cause with the Emperor Charles V. and joined him in his war against Francis I.; and in consequence of this movement Scotland, with a French regent for her ruler, was not likely to remain neutral. Desirous to serve the interests of Francis by finding occupation for the English on their own border, the duke made preparations for war, intending to invade England in the month of September. But there was a traitor in his coun-

¹ Rymer, vol. xiii. p. 761.

² Lesley, p. 118; Holinshed, iii. p. 1519.

cils who informed the enemy of every step of his proceedings—and that traitor was no other than Queen Margaret herself. She had now cooled in her affection for Albany; and until the temporary void in her fickle affections could be supplied she occupied it with her native country, whose interests for a time she had neglected. She entered into a correspondence with her traducer, Lord Dacre, and through spies and private messengers advertised him of the regent's purposes, so that Henry was enabled to make preparations on the Border to meet the coming storm, while he attended to the more important war in France. Even before the regent was ready hostilities were commenced on the side of the English both by insult and invasion. Henry banished all the French and Scots out of England and confiscated their goods; while, as an additional ignominy, he caused the Scotchmen to be driven back to their own country on foot, with a white cross sewed upon their upper garments. Dacre also made an inroad into Scotland as far as the town of Kelso, a part of which they committed to the flames. But here he was encountered by the Borderers of Merse and Teviotdale, who, although scarcely half the number of the enemy, assailed them with such spirit that they gave them a severe check and compelled them to retire beyond the Border.¹

At length all being in readiness the regent commenced his march, and reached Annan on the 9th of September. His army, if we may believe the statements of Wolsey, was one of the most numerous and best appointed that had ever been mustered for a war against England. It consisted, we are told, of eighty thousand men; it had forty-five large brass cannons, and was furnished with a very unusual proportion of hagbuts mounted upon tressels, that served the purposes of modern light artillery; with a corresponding share of hand-guns, the musketry of the period, that was now rapidly becoming the principal arm of warfare. This force also, although so numerous, was so abundantly provided with victuals as to set the fear of famine or want of supplies at defiance. In this large statement an overcharge may reasonably be suspected, and Wolsey in transmitting it to his master may have been desirous, according as events should fall out, either to enhance the glory of victory or cover the shame of defeat. He stated also that the north of England was in consternation, and that Cumberland was likely to be overrun and wasted, as not above sixteen thousand men could be mustered in the whole country to resist the invaders.² Equally

despondent were the accounts of the Earl of Shrewsbury, whom Henry had appointed lieutenant-general of the marches, with a commission to summon the whole army under his charge from sixteen years old to sixty. To his master in France he wrote that the whole force he could muster did not exceed twenty thousand men, and that for this force he was provided neither with artillery nor money. Had the Scots in such circumstances been under the leading of one of the heroes of the old war of independence, they might either have inflicted such a heavy blow upon England as would have given safety to their country for many years to come, or at the least, they might have relieved their ally by compelling the return of Henry and his armies to England. But Albany was no Douglas or Randolph in battle, while in politics he was unequally matched with Dacre and Wolsey. He paused and negotiated when he should have advanced and fought; and after a correspondence with Dacre he consented to a truce on the 11th of September, which was to last for one month, preparatory to negotiations for a more lasting peace, and in the meantime to dismiss his army and retire to Scotland.³ The numerous well-appointed army was accordingly dissolved at once, and Albany returned to Edinburgh. Considering the connection that was to take place between the two kingdoms in less than a century, it was well that they should now as much as possible be at peace—that the intervening space should be occupied with neither fresh Floddens nor new Bannockburns—that the military trophies of both nations should have time to gather round them the aged moss and peaceful wild-flowers that would soften them into picturesque objects, and make them grateful to either alike after the contention of centuries had ended. But Albany and his nobles were no prophets, and they had nothing to do with such an unexpected futurity. Their duty was to seize the present opportunity, and work for their own day and generation, but in this they egregiously failed; and posterity, while reaping the fruits of their forbearance, can accord no glory or gratitude to the recreants through whose cowardice or neglect these blessings were obtained.

After this inglorious inroad the regent, who was still in the dark as to the real causes of its failure, resolved to repair it by foreign assistance. If he had but supplies of military stores and money from France, and a reinforcement of its veteran soldiers, he might yet reanimate the spirit of the Scots against England, restore the ascendancy of his party, and counteract the

¹ State Papers, p. 107; Lesley, 119.

² Letter of Wolsey to Henry, Calig. vi. 242.

³ Lesley, pp. 122-123; Wolsey to Henry, Calig. vi. 242.

devices of Henry and his council. As yet, indeed, he had failed, but, as he complacently imagined, through no fault of his own; and all that he needed was only a little additional strength, not wisdom and experience. He accordingly announced his purpose of returning to France, but only for a season; and he pledged himself to return before the middle of August on the following year on pain of forfeiting his regency. For the management of affairs during his absence he appointed a council of regency composed of the Archbishop of Glasgow, chancellor, the Earls of Huntly, Argyle, and Arran, and Gresolles, a French knight, whom he bound by oath to attempt nothing that should counteract or weaken his authority. After these arrangements he embarked at Dumbarton on the 25th of October (1522), with a firmer intention of returning than he had felt at his former departure.¹

The departure of the duke was a signal for England to renew the war of diplomacy, and Clarencieux herald, was sent to Scotland with representations to the Scottish council, in a speech drawn up for him in outline by Wolsey himself, which was calculated to undermine the influence of France and Albany. He was to represent how profitable the countenance of England would be compared with the alliance of France; how greatly Henry's feelings were shocked at the unnatural war between his people and the Scots; and how much he wished for peace if the Scottish nobles would but ask it at his hands. To these were added the most discourteous charges against the Duke of Albany for his pride, presumption, and exclusive devotedness to France, for the sake of which he had not hesitated to disturb the public tranquillity.² The duke, who was now residing in Auvergne, was soon informed of these charges of Clarencieux, and that the herald was residing in Scotland; and well knowing that this appeal to the Scots during his absence was irregular, and calculated to overthrow his authority, he transmitted an indignant remonstrance to Wolsey, in which he complained of this informality, and justified the proceedings of his administration in Scotland.³ But this negotiation of Clarencieux herald with the Scottish council of regency, in which he tried to persuade them to break with France and form an alliance with England, came to nothing; he had talked in general terms of its advantages, as it would open the commerce of England and her allies to the Scots, and be a source of national profit; but as no specific statement was

made of the terms of such an alliance, nothing appears to have been sought by Wolsey except to gain time and mature his purposes of a Scottish invasion.⁴

This result was not long in following. At the command of the Earl of Surrey, son of the victor of Flodden, who was appointed lieutenant-general against the Scots in the room of the Earl of Shrewsbury, the Marquis of Dorset, Sir William Balmer, and Sir Anthony Darcy made an inroad into Teviotdale in April (1523), and after wasting the fields and burning the villages, they returned to England with their booty, the chief part of which consisted of four thousand head of cattle. Surrey himself at the head of ten thousand men burst into the Merse, levelled castle and hut alike in his destructive progress, and burnt the town of Jedburgh and its ancient monastery to the ground. And Dacre, not to be outdone in the work of havoc, once more advanced upon Kelso, which he now utterly destroyed, as well as many villages in its neighbourhood, and inflicted considerable damage upon its noble abbey.⁵ In this transition state of the religion of England, in which the old was beginning to be despised while the new was not understood, the venerable monasteries of their common faith had ceased to be respected, and even the garth of the church was no protection. It was not wholly owing to Knox and the Scottish reformers that our stately religious fanes became heaps of ruin. The "rascal multitude" merely completed what English chivalry had commenced.

These events were sufficient to recall Albany to Scotland, and before they were well ended he had set sail. Anticipating his return the English ships in the straits between Dover and Calais had been commissioned to intercept him; but aware of this danger the duke had embarked at Brest in Bretagne, and sailed by the west coast of England. His fleet consisted of eighty-seven small vessels, carrying four thousand French infantry, five hundred men-at-arms, a thousand hagbuteers, six hundred horses, of which a hundred were barbed, and a formidable train of artillery consisting of large cannons, double cannons, and pavaies or small pieces mounted on light two-wheeled cars. Three thousand Swiss were expected to follow, men accustomed to higher mountains than those of Scotland, and better disciplined than the Scots. It was also said that the arrival of Albany would be followed by Richard de la Pole, a pretender to the crown of England through his descent from the sister of Edward IV., and whose claims, it was thought, supported by France and

¹ Lesley, p. 123; Calig. b. ii. p. 327.

² Calig. b. vi. 265.

³ Ibid. 240.

⁴ Calig. b. viii. 96. ⁵ Lesley, p. 124; Buchanan, b. xiv. 17.

Scotland, would be more dangerous to Henry than hostile fleets and armies.¹

At the landing of the duke in Kirkcudbright on the 21st of September (1523) there was necessity both of vigorous and instant action, and it was evident that the supplies he had brought would not be more than sufficient for the emergency. Surrey had determined to lay waste the Scottish borders for twelve miles inland so completely that it should remain a desert for ever; and Margaret, who was devoted to the English interests, kept up her disgraceful system of espial, and informed him of all the measures of the Scottish government. There was now a treaty between them to the effect that James V., though still a boy, should be placed on the throne; and that under his name she should have the management of public affairs, assisted by a council, while Surrey was to advance upon Edinburgh for the purpose of establishing her son's authority and her own. The Scottish lords also, and especially they whose estates were on the borders, although willing to maintain a defensive war for the protection of their own property, were wholly disinclined to an invasion, which they regarded as a French measure, from which their country could derive no advantage. Thus far the nobles were in the right; but such a conclusion little suited the views of Albany, or the preparations for war which he had brought with him. He was anxious to redeem the character he had lost in his former expedition, and serve the interests of Francis by a fresh inroad in which he doubted not of being successful; but before this could be done it was necessary to remove these obstacles which he found at his arrival. And this he effected with considerable dexterity. By appointing twelve Scottish gentlemen of the French king's archer guard, whom he had brought for the purpose, to wait upon James V. and protect his person, he made sure that the young sovereign would be in the keeping of those who were devoted to his interests. He bought over the queen, who had been so parsimoniously supplied by her brother that she had pawned her cupboard of plate, and had "nothing to find her meat," and by his rich presents convinced her that he would be a better paymaster than Henry. With the same kind of arguments, of which he had been furnished with a bountiful supply, he enlightened the understandings and gave new life to the patriotism of the Scottish nobles, so that when he talked of Flodden, and invoked them to avenge the death of their fathers, they fell down upon their knees and

promised him their hearty obedience. An active war against England without further scruple or delay was decided and decreed by the assembled parliament, and an army was mustered on the Borough Muir, which, independently of the foreign auxiliaries, was about forty thousand strong. And among these Scottish ranks was one man, an ordinary volunteer, yet worth that whole army combined, although his military services were not of greater account than those of a common spearman. It was George Buchanan, the prince of Scottish literature, who was to found an empire compared with which the present contest was but the war of the cranes and the pigmies. And yet, here, he was doomed to trail a pike and follow such a leader as Albany!

When the duke commenced his march, it was already too late in the season for the beginning of a campaign. It was the 28th of October. Heavy rains and snow had already fallen, by which the country, having few tolerable roads, was all but impassable to his heavy artillery. When after a laborious march his army had reached the Tweed, it was encamped opposite Wark, the siege of which he forthwith commenced, instead of advancing to more important enterprises. But even already the murmurs of the nobles had commenced, and notwithstanding the French gold that had been distributed among them, they were determined not to cross the Border, or attack the English in their own country. Even in besieging this fortress, therefore, the duke was obliged to rely upon his foreign auxiliaries more than upon the Scots themselves, who refused to carry their hostilities beyond the Tweed. The account of the stronghold by Buchanan gives a distinct idea of all such Border defences of the period, and is therefore worthy of attention. "Wark castle," he says, "consists of a strongly fortified and very high tower, in the inner court, which is surrounded by a double wall. The outer wall incloses a large space of ground, whither the country people in time of war are accustomed to seek refuge, together with their cattle and the produce of their farms. The inner incloses a much narrower space, but is surrounded by a ditch, and better fortified with towers raised upon it."² As the Scottish army refused to advance, Albany sent two thousand French soldiers across the river; they commenced the attack of the castle with their wonted spirit, and made themselves masters of the outer court; but the defenders having set fire to the barns and straw, and made a brave resistance under Sir William Lisle, their cap-

¹ Letters of Margaret to Surrey, and Lord Ogle to Surrey; State Papers; Carte's *History of England*, vol. iii. p. 55.

² Buchanan in Aikman's *History of Scotland*, b. xiv. 22.

tain, the French after an hour and a half of hard conflict were dislodged from their position. On the two following days they battered the inner wall with their cannon, and having made what they reckoned a practicable breach, they boldly attempted to storm it, but were exposed to such discharges of shot and arrows that they were unable to advance or maintain their footing. Although thus repulsed, they would have renewed their attack on the following day, which was the 4th of November; had not such a storm arisen during the night that they apprehended a rising of the Tweed, which would have prevented their return. They accordingly made haste, while it was time, to cross the river and rejoin the main army.¹

While Wark castle was so unprofitably besieged the Earl of Surrey, who was then at Holy Island, ordered the advanced part of his army to meet at Barmore Wood, about five miles from Wark, for the purpose of raising the siege, while the rest of his army followed to be in readiness for a decisive battle. But of this there was little chance, for the Scottish leaders were still resolutely bent on giving no offence to England, while Albany's ardour seemed to have suddenly cooled at the approach of Surrey, whose army in number was equal to his own, and far more unanimous in spirit and ardour for conflict. The regent, therefore, drew off his artillery, and gave sudden orders for an immediate retreat, to the great astonishment of Surrey himself, who had not expected so cheap a victory. "Never man," he wrote to King Henry, "departed with more shame, or with more fear, than the duke has done this day." The whole damage wrought by the Scots to the English border by this wholesale inroad, he also estimated at nothing more than ten pounds sterling! The haste and confusion of the retreat were accelerated by a snow-storm, so that the army returned home like a crowd of stragglers, and Albany, after this second English expedition, which was even more inglorious than his first, retired to Edinburgh.² But here neither peace nor safety awaited him. A parliament which was held on Tuesday the 17th of November was a turbulent scene of mutual recrimination, in which the accusations of the nobles were too loud and too hard for the arguments and explanations of the regent. The instant dismissal of the French auxiliaries was demanded, which was complied with; and owing to the storms of winter, many of these unfortunate strangers were shipwrecked in their passage homeward. Albany, who had spent three hundred thousand crowns allowed to him by France for his last

voyage, and other necessary expenses—a large portion evidently having been spent in bribes and gratuities upon those men who were now combined to browbeat him and calumniate him—now began to talk of repayment, and for this purpose he proposed a sale of the royal domains; but his proposal, which would have reduced the royal revenue to the lowest ebb, was peremptorily refused. Finding by the rejection of these and other overtures that his influence was at an end, he was now only anxious to abdicate his troublesome office upon the least discreditable terms. He desired permission to depart in the following spring to France for five months, that he might personally ascertain what aid Francis I. was disposed to afford to the Scots in their war against England; and while all consented to his absence, some of these nobles demanded his resignation also. It was agreed that he should be at liberty to leave the kingdom in the following year, but the intermediate time was spent in bickering upon the proposals which he submitted for their ratification previous to his departure. He set sail from Dumbarton on the 20th of May, 1524. His chief purpose by these repeated sojournings in a country of which he was weary from the first, seems to have been to strengthen the alliance between Scotland and France for the exclusive benefit of the latter; but in this he signally failed by involving that alliance in his own unpopularity, so that he left it in a worse and weaker plight than he found it. At his departure, as before, stipulations were made about his return, and it was agreed on both sides that if this did not occur by the first of September, he should be held to have forfeited the regency. But this was little more than a decent pretext to avoid the shame of a conclusive leave-taking, as this was the last of his visits to Scotland, which he never afterwards showed a wish or purpose to re-enter.³

It will be remembered that even before the Duke of Albany's last arrival a plan had been devised for getting rid of his claims to the regency altogether, and establishing a close alliance with England to the ruin of that with France. It had been proposed by Margaret, the queen-dowager, to the Earl of Surrey, and it met the concurrence of Wolsey and the English council. By this device James was to be arbitrarily placed upon the Scottish throne as if he were already of full age, while his reign was in reality to be in the hands of his mother and a regency devoted to the interests of King Henry. The departure of Albany was the signal to resume this interrupted device, and Margaret was so

¹ Buch. in *Aik.*, xiv. 22; Lesley, p. 125. ² Buchanan, xiv. 23.

³ Ellis's Letters, vol. i. pp. 240-247; State Papers

successful as to gain over several of the Scottish nobles to take part in it. The chief of these was the Earl of Arran, the late rival of Albany, and next to him in the royal succession; and as he had allowed himself with his usual fickleness to be won over to the cause of England, which he had previously opposed, his alliance with the queen gave such a preponderance to the English party, that they could now boldly proceed to the installation of James V. as their sovereign. Margaret accordingly repaired to Stirling, and having quickly obtained the consent of the lords to whom the guardianship of her son was intrusted, she brought him to Edinburgh amidst the acclamations of the populace. Attended by the powerful lords of her faction Arran, Lennox, Crawford, and others, the youthful sovereign was enabled to go in royal procession to Holyrood, the palace of his fathers, and assume the style of full-grown sovereignty by issuing proclamations and receiving the oaths of allegiance. Lords and barons knelt to tender their submission; the populace shouted and shed tears of gladness: they had now a king to rule over them instead of a tumultuous council or domineering foreign influence. Such was the sudden movement of a single day, and the success that crowned it, while the regency of Albany was proclaimed to be at an end, and the promises of its continuation abrogated by royal authority. On the third day after the queen in her son's name took possession of the castle of Edinburgh, which became their residence for the greater part of the following winter, and to make sure of the city she removed the provost then in office, and appointed Lord Maxwell, one of her supporters, to that important post.¹ But notwithstanding this general triumph at the change and the alacrity of obedience with which the new reign was welcomed, there were several both of the higher clergy and influential nobility who demurred and stood aloof. James as yet would be ruled by his mother, who in turn would be under the control of her brother Henry. The alliance with France would be dissolved, and the dreaded ascendancy of England confirmed. Nor could the absurdity of the measure be overlooked. James as yet was only twelve years and three months old, while, by the law of Scotland, a sovereign even at the earliest could not attain majority until he had completed the age of fourteen. Those who had the courage to speak out were the Bishops of St. Andrews and Aberdeen. They appealed to this informality occasioned by the age of James, and they represented the impropriety of removing him at such an early period to the temptations

of a court and the responsibilities of kingly rule. They also objected to the violation of those promises given by the nobles to the Duke of Albany, who was still virtually regent of the kingdom. But the whole current was against them, and for their recusancy in parliament to the prevalent wish they were committed to prison. As it was of importance that the opposition of James Beaton, the influential Archbishop of St. Andrews, should be overcome, Wolsey endeavoured to tempt him to the cause of England by offering to procure for him a cardinal's hat, but the alluring offer was rejected. The primate still maintained the cause of Albany, and for his obstinacy he was thrown into prison by the queen, who thus made him her confirmed enemy when he afterwards obtained his liberty.²

Of the prince who was thus so suddenly raised to rule, and at an age so immature, the character he already displayed could not be a subject of indifference. Accordingly an account of his accomplishments, habits, and demeanour had been transmitted by the English ambassadors to Wolsey; and in these we can recognize the spirit that would maintain a bold struggle against the difficulties of his early position, and might in the end prove victorious. He rode well and boldly; he tilted with skill at the glove, the mark to be touched with his spear-point in full career; and he sang and danced in a manner that promoted the general pleasure and improved the social intercourse of those who had the privilege of his society. "All which his princely acts and doings," say these careful reporters, "be so excellent for his age, not yet of thirteen years till Easter next, that in our opinions it is not possible they should be amended." On his personal appearance they could not bestow a higher compliment when they added, "Much more it is to our comfort to see and conceive that in personage, favour, and countenance, and in all other his proceedings, his grace resembleth very much to the king's highness our master." It will be remembered that at this time Henry VIII. was accounted, not only by his own but foreign courts, one of the handsomest men in Europe, a distinction which he shared with Francis I. at the Field of the Cloth of Gold. Henry's high reputation in warlike exercises had already excited the prince's emulation; and on hearing that his uncle sometimes used a buckler, a piece of defensive armour already falling into disuse, James wished to have one also. The ambassador accordingly requests the cardinal to send him an ornamented shield; not a mere toy, however, but one of full weight and proportions, as the young king could endure no boyish weapon, for

¹ Lesley, p. 129; Buchanan, b. xiv. 24.

² Calig. b. vi. 378; Pinkerton, ii. p. 241.

even his rapier was full three feet long in the blade, and yet he could draw it like a man. The sketch also indicates that such a princely disposition had now fallen into evil guidance, and that even already that revengeful spirit was nursing, which was to recoil upon his instructors as well as his proclaimed enemies. "It is suspected," Dr. Magnus adds in his letter to Wolsey, "that his inclination will be much inclined to cruelty, for when the queen's grace taketh displeasure against any of the lords or others, then she procureth the said young king to look down and frown upon them, and to hold unto them some sore and sharp words." In all these statements we find that of a truth the boy was father of the man. The gallant chivalrous knight, the bold overweening sovereign, the reckless adventurer, the merciless revengeful justiciary were all already there in the bud, and only a few years of their kindred soil and elements were needed to expand them into full-blown maturity.¹

The revolution which Margaret effected so suddenly was, indeed, what in modern times is called a *coup d'état*—a stunning blow under which a nation reels, to find on its recovery that all has been changed. Although the scheme had a year previously been laid before them it was so executed that Henry and his council were taken by surprise, and could only follow the lead of that bold, successful woman by whom it had been effected. At her request a body-guard of two hundred men-at-arms were sent down to Scotland for the service of the young king, their expenses to be defrayed from Henry's treasury. To relieve the poverty of James on his assumption of royalty a thousand nobles were remitted to him, and at the same time a present of two hundred marks to the queen and one hundred pounds to the Earl of Arran, while these gifts were represented as only the precursors and first instalments of better things to come. But Margaret and Arran, now at the head of affairs, were not only aware of the uncertainty of these promises, but dissatisfied with the amount of the earnest they had already received, and they opened a negotiation with Francis I., apparently to ascertain whether he would not bid higher than Henry should they abandon the cause of England. David Beaton, the nephew of the Archbishop of St. Andrews, and afterwards the redoubted cardinal, appears to have been their envoy on the occasion, and they could not have selected a more able intriguer, or one more devoted to the ascendancy of the French cause in Scotland. But Francis was already preparing for that unfortunate ex-

pedition into Italy which ended in his defeat and captivity at Pavia, and he could afford them nothing more than commendations of their proceedings and promises of his future support. He was unable to remit money, or even to send Albany to Scotland; and he advised them to temporize with England till the following year, when he might be in better condition to aid them. He welcomed their readiness to continue the Scottish alliance with France, and reminded them of the proposal of marriage between their young king and his daughter, which had been settled by one of their former treaties. He also stated that the Earl of Angus had left France without his permission and taken refuge in England; and that he ought, therefore, to be considered as devoted to that country, and treated as a rebel. Such were his answers addressed officially to James V. as king, and in writing to Margaret he only requested her to attend to the real interests of her son.²

This admonition was by no means unseasonable or undeserved. After the display of stern, prompt decision which the queen had exhibited in the late change of government, her selfish demands for more money and the ambiguity of her proceedings had both disgusted and alarmed the English council; and in consequence of this tampering with France, of which they were likely to be aware, they could scarcely regard her as a safe adherent. But her conduct also showed that her adherence was no longer of much value. Yielding to her passions she had now given herself up to a new lover, and one of an age and rank unsuited to her condition; for it was Henry Stewart, second son of Lord Evandale, whom, in spite of his youth, she had raised to the responsible office of lord-treasurer, and was now eager to take for her third husband as soon as her divorce from the Earl of Angus could be procured. The people were indignant, and the Earls of Lennox and Glencairn abandoned her society and the capital. Estranged from her, also, were the other nobles of her party, who, although they received pensions from England, were in a great measure excluded from their share in the government, which was now chiefly monopolized by Arran and herself; and they naturally turned their attention to the Earl of Angus, whose superior power would be sufficient to eclipse the earl, and his marital authority to coerce the queen. Angus was equally desirous to return to Scotland and resume hereditary influence, and it was for this purpose that he had stolen from France after two and a half years of exile, and was now in attendance on the court of London, waiting for the oppor-

¹ Letters of Magnus and Ratcliffe to Wolsey; Calig. vi. 333.

² Calig. vi. 411.

tunity. Such a measure, indeed, recommended itself to Wolsey as the only method not only of suppressing the party of Albany and France, but giving new life and vigour to that of England. He endeavoured in the first instance to reconcile Margaret to her husband; but as, for reasons which may easily be surmised, the queen would listen to no proposal of that nature, the cardinal saw that nothing but the entire suppression both of her and the Earl of Arran would make for the interests of England and his sovereign. It was resolved that Angus should be permitted to return to Scotland, and be recognized as the head of the English party; but before this was done it was necessary that he should be wholly pledged to the interests of King Henry. A secret compact was therefore drawn up, to which he and his brother Sir George Douglas bound themselves by oath. Its chief conditions were, that he should support the king against the Duke of Albany, and that he should openly oppose the latter if he attempted to return to Scotland before the king had attained the age of twenty-one. He was to attempt an agreement with the queen and Arran; but if unsuccessful Henry was to support him against both, while Angus was to support the cause of England against every power whatever, that of his own sovereign excepted. Certain pecuniary benefits were also to accrue to the Earl of Angus and his brother, which were perhaps clearly understood, although not verbally expressed. In this way the two became the liegemen of Henry rather than of their own natural king. But even yet much intrigue and negotiation followed before they were suffered to depart; and at length, when they entered Scotland, which they did in November (1524), it was rather in the stealthy character of fugitives and outlaws than the high nobles of the realm and delegates of a powerful sovereign.

Having arrived in his native country, the first attempt of the Earl of Angus was to effect a reconciliation and form a political alliance with Margaret. He therefore wrote to her in gentle terms, abstained from coming to court, and contented himself with a retinue of not more than forty horse when he travelled abroad. But the queen's inordinate passion for Henry Stewart, which she manifested in defiance of all decency and shame, made these lowly advances of her husband hopeless. Dr. Magnus, the English ambassador, seconded the attempts of Angus and endeavoured to persuade the queen by representing the advantages of a compliance; in this case her English pensions would be continued, the English guard for the protection of her son maintained, and a matrimonial alliance between him and the Princess Mary of England

secured. This last, indeed, was a tempting bait, as Mary was heiress-apparent to the English throne. But Margaret was obdurate, and Angus on his part resolved no longer to walk in the fetters of his mock humility; he would right himself by a *coup d'état* which should rival that of the queen. Accordingly, while the parliament was in the second week of its sitting; when they had settled the important question of the regency by declaring that of Albany to have ceased on account of his continued absence, and forming a new one consisting of Beaton, Archbishop of St. Andrews and chancellor, the Bishop of Aberdeen, and the Earls of Arran and Argyle, with the queen at their head; and when nothing but the subject of a general peace with England remained to be considered, Edinburgh itself was taken by storm and its streets were awakened by the din of a midnight conflict. On the 23d of November (1524), before daylight, the walls were scaled by an armed band who opened the gates to their companions, and the cross of Edinburgh was quickly in the possession of a throng of Border spearmen. It was then only learned that this daring onslaught had been effected by the Earls of Angus and Lennox, the master of Kilmaurs, Scott of Buccleugh, and other barons, accompanied by not more than four hundred followers. At the cross they proclaimed themselves the faithful subjects of the king; they afterwards proceeded to the council and desired its members to take the person of the young sovereign into their keeping. But the daylight, which showed the smallness of their numbers, encouraged their opponents; the castle guns began to fire into the city for the purpose of dislodging the intruders; and several lords with their followers assembled at Holyrood, to the number of four or five hundred, armed with hagbuts, were ready to sally out upon Angus and his associates and drive them from the city. The earl, indeed, behaved with commendable forbearance and gave strict orders that none should be injured; but the artillery of the castle still kept up its cannonade, to the great danger both of the houses and citizens. In this extremity Dr. Magnus, the Bishop of Aberdeen, and the Abbot of Cambuskenneth repaired to Holyrood to obtain the queen's command that the castle guns should be silenced; but while she admitted the prelate and abbot, she sharply ordered the ambassador to begone and not concern himself with matters that belonged to themselves. Thus the state of things continued until the afternoon, when a proclamation having been issued in the king's name commanding Angus and his followers to leave the city, he complied and retired to Dalkeith. The town being thus

cleared and temporary order restored, the queen when it was dark left Holyrood with her son by torchlight, and went up to the castle as a more assured place of safety. James was not likely to forget this early Douglas welcome; we know that in after-life he was not slack to requite it.¹

An important coalition now took place between two important personages, through which the affairs of the kingdom were to receive their chief direction. James Beaton, Archbishop of St. Andrews and chancellor, was one of the most able, politic, and ambitious, as well as richest men of the kingdom; but being alienated from the queen, who had offended him beyond his powers of forgiveness, he had recognized in the return of the Earl of Angus to Scotland the best means both of safety and revenge. His advances were welcomed; a union was established between the formidable pair; and by their combined resources of wealth, sagacity, courage, and political influence they were more than a match either for the party of Albany or that of the queen and the Earl of Arran. Alarmed at this union of the most influential of Scotland's peers with the ablest and wealthiest of its prelates, Margaret and Arran endeavoured to counterbalance it by English alliance and aid. An embassy, therefore, was despatched to England, to express the queen's good-will towards her native country and her desire for the establishment of peace between it and Scotland, and to show that France could not safely be omitted from this peace unless the marriage between James V. and the Princess Mary were finally decided and the peace between the two countries made perpetual. To prove, also, that they were sincere in their offers, the queen and Arran sent Marchmont herald to France, with letters to Francis I. and Albany, announcing to the latter that as the first of September, the date for his return, had elapsed without his appearance, the three estates had abrogated his regency and transferred the government to themselves; and they required him to restore the artillery lodged in the castle of Dunbar under the keeping of Courcelles and his French garrison. They also reminded Francis how greatly Scotland had suffered in its commerce through attachment to his cause, by which the traffic of their ships at the ports of England, Flanders, and Spain had been suspended.² These embassies, if sent at an earlier period, might have been availing, but now they were too late; they were the poor resources of fear and despondency, and therefore unworthy of

confidence. And besides, Henry and his council had adopted such a course that the co-operation of the queen and the Earl of Arran was no longer necessary, and might be thrown aside with positive advantage.

While they were thus left to their fate, and with an influence that was daily diminishing, the party of Angus and the chancellor was proportionally increasing in boldness and in strength. The chief advantage possessed by their rivals was their having the young king's person in their keeping; and this they resolved to transfer to their own guardianship that they might rule under the sanction of his name. It was the old device which had so often signalized the royal minorities of Scotland. They assembled at St. Andrews, where bold measures were devised, and after twenty days of deliberation they announced their purport. They asserted that the king's residence of the castle of Edinburgh was unhealthy, owing to the tempestuous winds and the foul vapours of the North Loch, and that it was dangerous in consequence of the frequent tumults in the city.³ They therefore summoned a convention of the three estates to meet at Stirling on the 6th of February, 1525, and declared that in the meantime no letters of the king were to be obeyed until they were issued by a council chosen by the three estates. It was in vain that the queen endeavoured to counteract this decisive measure by invoking the aid of her brother, and entreating the advance of the Duke of Norfolk upon the Border with ten thousand men to overawe the Douglas coalition; it was equally in vain that she implored the few lords who still adhered to her to march forth at the head of their followers and encounter her enemies in the field. The prestige which her beauty and accomplishments, her intellectual energy and bold successful proceedings had won for her, had been recklessly dissipated by her wasteful prodigality and still more culpable licentiousness, so that neither kinsman, countryman, nor adherent was willing to advocate her cause or advance to her rescue. Her only resource was submission, and this was made more palatable by the readiness with which the terms of her own proposing were accepted. These were that the residence of James should be the palace of Holyrood instead of the castle of Edinburgh; that the disposal of the Scottish benefices, of late become a ground of contention, should be vested in a council of six or eight peers, with the queen at their head, who was to have a casting vote in the election, while all the livings under the value of one thousand pounds should be at her sole disposal;

¹ Calig. b. i. 121; Letters of Dr. Magnus and Ratcliffe to Wolsey.

² Calig. vi. 191; *Epistol. Reg. Scotor.* i. 351-356.

³ Calig. vi. 394.

that the guardianship of the king should be intrusted to a council of the nobles appointed by parliament, with Margaret to preside over them; and that the Earl of Angus should desist from his marital claims either to her person or property, under the penalty of high treason.¹ In this manner she still secured, ostensibly at least, some portion of her power and influence, gratified her resentment against her husband, and obtained full freedom for her illicit intercourse with her paramour Stewart. These terms she proposed and obtained from the dominant faction through her negotiators, the Lords of Cassilis and Eglinton, and Dr. Magnus, the English ambassador. But how little these concessions accorded with her wishes, and how insincere she was in the treaty, was manifested only the day after it was signed by the letters which she secretly transmitted to Rome and France. Those to the pope were for the purpose of influencing him in the disposal of the Scottish benefices, but more especially for accelerating her divorce from the Earl of Angus. The other missives were to the Duke of Albany, with whom she was eager to be reconciled, and by whose aid she trusted to overthrow the coalition of her husband. In these letters she recognized the duke as still regent of Scotland, and professed her attachment to the cause and interests of France, desiring also to know what aid she might expect from that quarter in return. As for England, she was resolved that no peace should be established between it and Scotland unless France should be included in the treaty, and that no peace should be concluded until his answer had arrived. She also expressed her rooted opposition to her husband Angus, and declared that sooner than be reconciled to him she would leave the kingdom. But this infamous double-dealing of the queen, instead of advancing only ruined her already expiring cause; for not more than a few days after she learned that France, on the brink of ruin by the defeat of Pavia and the captivity of its king, could no longer give her aid. Her letters also, which were intercepted at Milan and sent to England, deprived her of any further sympathy from her brother, by revealing her treachery and showing how little her professions and promises were to be trusted.² It was evident from these that for the sake of French gold and French support she was ready to sacrifice the interests of her son and brother alike, and involve England, the land of her birth, and Scotland, the country of her adoption, in those terrible wars by which both kingdoms had so long and so deeply suf-

fered. Thus bereaved alike of French and English support, her consequence was still further diminished by an alliance established between France and England, and afterwards by a three years' truce between England and Scotland, so that neither she nor her party could profit any longer by national discords and contentions. One effort, indeed, she made to prevent the ratification of the truce with England, but it proved a miserable failure. Under her instigation her ally, the Earl of Arran, whose political interests were also at stake, at the commencement of 1526 raised five thousand men with which he advanced to Linlithgow, intending to stop the truce by levying open war upon the government itself. But the Earl of Angus, accompanied by the young king and the Earls of Lennox and Argyle, marched against the rebels with the royal standard displayed, and no sooner did Arran obtain a sight of it than he and his followers fled and dispersed.³

The war was now reduced to the narrow limits of the matrimonial quarrel between Margaret and Angus. Henry, ashamed of his sister's conduct as a wife and woman, was labouring in his own coarse style of remonstrance, and with his wonted imperiousness of temper, to reduce her to some show of agreement with her husband. Angus also, who no longer cared for her, but had still an affectionate eye upon her lands and revenues, of which he wished to have the full use, was earnest to the same effect. But the queen, blinded by her passion, would listen to neither, for she was intent upon her projected marriage with Henry Stewart; and at last she obtained the long-sought sentence of divorce, Angus having made no opposition, as soon as he learned that even in the event of being reconciled to his wife, the council had resolved that he should have no claim upon her possessions. The sentence of divorce was easily obtained from a corrupt priesthood, not upon the ground of the notorious adulteries of her husband or her own, which were known to the whole nation, but upon the frivolous plea of a previous promise of marriage he had given to another lady, by which his union with the queen that followed was declared to be void. Immediately on obtaining this verdict Margaret espoused her favourite; but as the marriage was private, and without the royal consent, Stewart was thrown into prison. His confinement, however, was but temporary, and the queen had influence afterwards to procure his being ennobled under the title of Lord Methven. This was the last exertion of her political existence, for after this period she appears to have

¹ *Acts of the Parliaments of Scotland*, ii. p. 289; Magnus to Wolsey, Calig. ii. 59-61; Lesley, 132; Calig. iii. 102.

² Calig. vi. 416.

³ Lesley, p. 133; Calig. ii. 249.

sunk into insignificance and universal contempt.¹

The field of ambition was now open to the Earl of Angus, and he was not slow to occupy it. He won by his gifts and courtesies the confidence of the young king, and alienated him from the queen, with whose marriage James was deeply displeased. He had already the chancellor Beaton and the powerful Earl of Lennox on his side, and he now strengthened it by an alliance with the Earl of Arran, who could no longer countenance the cause of Margaret. Having thus in substance the chief power of the kingdom in his own hands, he was anxious that the fact should be recognized and felt—that at least he should be *maire de palais* if not the crown-wearing sovereign. Nothing stood in his way except the authority of the secret council, but even this he had a plan to obviate. James had now reached the age of fourteen years, and at this period by the law of the kingdom a royal majority had commenced. A parliament was therefore summoned in June (1526), at which the fact of the expiration of the king's nonage was stated; and as his right to enter upon the exercise of the royal prerogatives could not be denied, the authority of the secret council ceased as being no longer necessary. By the same rule every other authority which had been established for the period of the king's minority was at an end, and Angus now reigned without a rival. But it was necessary that this offensive superiority should be decently concealed, and a new secret council was formed of men who were devoted to the earl, or whom he could overawe and control. The council consisted of the Archbishop of Glasgow, the Bishops of Aberdeen and Galloway, the Earls of Glencairn, Lennox, and Morton, and the Lord Maxwell, and it was declared that by the advice of this council the king should exercise his rule. Soon, however, it was indicated by unmistakable tokens that this secret council was nothing more than a blind, and that the whole administration as well as the sovereign himself were under the dominion of Angus and his imperious brother, Sir George Douglas. As soon as an office in the church or the state became vacant they filled it with one of their family or adherents; and thus, while the proud house of Douglas had suddenly shot upward into its old predominance, it brought the old evils in its train—arrogance, feud, and conflict; rapine and insecurity; mutual doubt and mutual hatred, in which property was insecure and life uncertain. It was the tyranny of a single family maintaining

its usurpation by imparting its own lawless privileges to all who joined it and upheld it. Having thus made his power secure, the Earl of Angus and his faction took the young king upon a royal progress, under the pretext of restoring order in the troubled districts, and suppressing thieves and other unlawful persons. But, as Pitscottie had remarked, "none were found greater thieves and traitors than were in their own company. . . . And none at that time durst strive with a Douglas, nor yet a Douglas's man, for if they would they got the worse; therefore none durst complain of any extortion, theft, reif, or slaughter done to them by the Douglasses or their men; in that cause they were not heard so long as the Douglasses had the court in guiding."

This bondage, which the young king felt intolerable, he was now anxious to break, and in one of these progresses a favourable opportunity seemed to be afforded. On the 24th of July (1526) the Earl of Angus, having James in his company, repaired to Jedburgh with the Lords Home and Fleming, Ker of Cessford, and other barons and Border chiefs, for the purpose of taming the Borders and suppressing the marauding clans that infested them. In this expedition, which lasted three days but accomplished little or nothing, James sent a private missive to Walter Scott of Buccleugh, explaining his desire to be liberated from the Douglasses, and showing that his return would be by the way of Melrose, where this object could be best attempted. Proud of so important a commission, and eager to prove his loyalty, the bold Border baron mustered the moss-troopers of his following to the number of a thousand men, and took post at the back of Halidon Hill, on the road near Melrose, which the royal cavalcade was about to pass. Home, Ker, and Fernihirst had already taken their leave and ridden off before Angus saw this formidable gathering of the Scotts. He sent a messenger to ask what this concourse meant, to whom Buccleugh replied that he was in attendance to do the king service, and to show his power and following as was the custom of the Borders. He was again commanded in the king's name to be gone with his company and come no nearer under the penalty of treason; but to this the Border baron answered that he knew the king's mind well enough, and would not be hindered by such commands from coming to the royal presence. Angus then said to the king, "Sir, yonder is Buccleugh, and the thieves of Annandale, to intercept your grace on the way. I vow to God they shall either fight or flee, and you shall tarry here on this knoll, and my brother George with you, with any other company you please: I shall

¹ Lesley, p. 133; Calig. vii. 29.

pass on and put yon thieves off the ground, and rid the way to your grace, or else die for it." James halted where he was required, attended by Sir George Douglas, the Earl of Lennox, Lord Erskine, and others of the royal household, while Angus advanced to give battle to the Borderers. His train was inferior in numbers, but superior in spirit, arms, and discipline to their opponents, being chiefly gentlemen of his own family. They dismounted from their horses to charge on foot, and encountered their enemies with such vigour that the greater part of them turned bridle and fled. Still the battle was uncertain, for Buccleugh, with his kinsmen and personal retainers, maintained the fight with great courage, when Home, Ker, and the others, having received tidings of the battle, returned upon the spur, and made a desperate, unexpected charge on the flank of the Borderers, who in consequence were borne back and put to flight, after leaving eighty of their number dead on the field. But the greatest disaster of the whole affray was the death of Ker of Cessford, who, following the chase too eagerly, was slain by the spear-stroke of one of the Elliots, to the great regret of both parties, by whom he was greatly beloved and his loss deeply lamented.¹

Another attempt to liberate the king was soon after made, and with a better prospect of success. Beaton, the chancellor, whom Angus had first used for his own ambitious purposes, and afterwards thrown aside and disobliged, and the Earl of Lennox, who had retired from the court in consequence of being suspected to have favoured the enterprise of Buccleugh, were now united against the Douglasses. Of these two Lennox was likely to prove a formidable antagonist to Angus, for he was not only powerful in his possessions and followers, but universally beloved in consequence of his popular, amiable qualities, while the king, who was aware of his discontent, had expressly applied to him for deliverance from his arrogant keepers and governors. Lennox was not long in mustering a formidable force of ten thousand men from Fife, Angus, Strathearn, and Stirling, and being joined by two thousand more sent by Beaton the chancellor, he marched from Stirling towards the capital. On reaching Linlithgow he unexpectedly found the Earl of Arran at the head of a still greater army and prepared to bar his further progress. It was an unkind as well as *un*Scottish antagonism, for Lennox was the sister's son of Arran; but the latter had been purposely thrown in the way by the Earl of Angus, in the hope that Lennox would not pro-

ceed to extremities against his uncle. But this relationship only made the Earl of Lennox more indignant, and he declared that he would either enter Edinburgh or die by the way. A battle between these powerful kinsmen was inevitable, and Arran sent a hasty message to the Earl of Angus at the capital, desiring him to come to his aid. The town bell was immediately rung, a muster of its men of war was made, and Angus with two thousand men hurried off to the scene of conflict, leaving his brother Sir George to follow with the rest of the array, and especially with the young king, who showed no desire for the expedition. But the reluctance of James was made of little account, and he was compelled to mount his horse and accompany the royal banner, which was to be unfurled against his own faithful adherents. He pretended to be sick, and often paused by the way, but as often he was hurried onward. On reaching Corstorphine the thunder of distant cannon was borne to them on the wind, which showed that the battle had commenced; and Sir George, transported into savage fury, would brook no further delay, but turning to the king and urging him to instant speed, he added, "Before the enemy shall take you from us, even if your body should be torn in pieces we shall secure a part of it!" After this they were not long in reaching the scene of action, but only to find that the battle was fought and ended. Arran had taken possession of a bridge across the river Avon, about a mile to the west of Linlithgow, and had posted the rest of his troops on the heights by which their adversaries must pass, so that Lennox was obliged to cross the river at a ford a little farther up near the nunnery of Manuel; but while his troops were engaged at a disadvantage with their enemies on the hills, who hurled great stones down upon them, the Earl of Angus arrived and quickly changed the character of the combat. At the weight of his charge and the war-cry of "A Douglas!" the troops of Lennox reeled, gave way, and took to flight. The king had sent speedy messengers before him to stay the slaughter, and especially to save the life of the Earl of Lennox; but that excellent nobleman had been foully done to death after he had surrendered by the bastard, Sir James Hamilton, who drew him away from his captors, and then murdered him in cold blood. When the king, therefore, entered the field Arran was found weeping over the body of his murdered nephew, which he had covered with his own scarlet cloak, saying, "The wisest man, the stoutest man, the hardiest man that ever was born in Scotland is slain this day!" Besides Lennox, the abbots of Melrose and Dunfermline, the baron of Houston and Stirling of Keir were

¹ Pitscottie, pp. 135, 136; Lesley, 134; Buchanan, b. xiv. 27.

slain.¹ While the Douglasses were thus triumphant over all their enemies, and had none to mate them, the dread and sorrow of James were increased. He was very sad and dolorous, says the old historian "for the tinsel [loss] of his eame [kinsman], the Earl of Lennox, and many other gentlemen with him, who perished by the king's occasion: for they enterprised the matter at the king's command. And further the king was very afraid, and despaired of his own life, because he knew well the Earl of Angus understood that he caused enterprise such acts against him; and nothing prospered well with the king against the said earl; therefore, he was afraid they would put hand upon his own body, considering all things succeeded so well with him." The historian, however, is honestly eager to clear the proud race, tyrants though they were, of any such disloyal tendency. "I can never find," he adds, "that ever the Earl of Angus or the Douglasses, or any of the Douglasses, failed to the king in any part. Though they were covetous, greedy, and oppressors of their neighbours, yet they were ever true, kind, and serviceable to the king in all his affairs, and oft-times offered their bodies in jeopardy for his sake."²

After their victory the Douglasses proceeded to use it for the suppression of their enemies and for their own personal profit. Accordingly their first proceeding was to make a rapid march to Stirling for the purpose of capturing the queen and chancellor, but both had fled. Suspecting that Beaton had concealed himself in his diocese of St. Andrews, the pursuers passed over into Fife; but, not being able to find him, they plundered the castle of St. Andrews and the abbey of Dunfermline, while the hard pressed archbishop, we are told, escaped detection by assuming the disguise of a shepherd and tending a flock of sheep.³ In the meantime, while the king was lamenting the death of the amiable Lennox and the extinction of his own hopes, Henry was congratulating the earls of Angus and Arran, and encouraging them to pursue their success by crushing their enemies, especially the chancellor, and attending to the education of the young king; or, in other words, training him for vassalage to England.⁴ Nor were the two nobles slack under such encouragement. Angus issued writs in the king's name for a parliament to assemble at Edinburgh on the 12th of November (1526), and after vindicating his own and his colleague's proceedings against Lennox, an ample confiscation followed of the property belonging to the chief enemies

of the house of Douglas. Thus the estates of the Earl of Cassilis and Lord Evandale were assigned to the Earl of Arran, and the lands of Lord Lindsay and those of the eastern and northern barons who had joined Lennox were granted to the Earl of Angus. As for the fugitive and hunted chancellor, he had the discretion to submit and conciliate his enemies by a gift of two thousand marks to Arran, and by bestowing the lands of the abbey of Kilwinning upon Angus. But nothing could remove the remorse and sorrow of the Earl of Arran on account of his nephew's death; and forsaking the court and the desperate game of ambition, for which he had shown himself so unfit, he retired to one of his castles and shut himself up in solitude, leaving the whole undivided power in the hands of the Earl of Angus; and now all power, as well as the chief offices in the state, were in the possession of the Douglasses, while this influence, like other usurpations, tended not to the restoration of order but a tenfold deepening of the national anarchy and confusion. A few notices of these are sufficient to indicate the general lawlessness and insecurity. A baron, one of the Douglasses, who had slain a gentleman at the very porch of St. Giles's, the principal church of Edinburgh, could yet walk openly in the streets during the sitting of parliament, without being questioned or molested. The Earl of Cassilis having offended the pride of the bastard, Sir James Hamilton, the latter procured the earl to be waylaid and murdered by Hugh Campbell, the sheriff of Ayr. In Edinburgh a gentleman of the family of the Macleans was killed by Sir John Campbell; and in the shire of Aberdeen there was hot skirmishing between the Forbeses and the Leslies, in which several barons, gentlemen, and commons were slain.⁵

But one terrible act of feudal vengeance by which this period was signalized is enough to throw the others into the shade. In the beginning of spring on the following year John Stewart, a groom of the Earl of Lennox, who, by the death of his master, had been thrown out of employment, and who had wandered about revolving gloomy and vindictive thoughts, came to Edinburgh, and chanced to meet with another retainer of the earl, of whom he inquired whether he had seen Sir James Hamilton in the city; and on his fellow-servant replying that he had seen him, the other indignantly broke forth:—"Most ungrateful knave! didst thou suffer that villain to live, who murdered our earl, the best of masters? away! you deserve to be hanged!" Having thus obscurely hinted his purpose Stewart proceeded to Holyrood and found two

¹ Buchanan, b. xiv. 28, 29; Lesley, p. 135; Pitscottie, pp. 136-140.

² Pitscottie, p. 139.

³ Pitscottie, p. 139.

⁴ Calig. vii. 67, 69.

⁵ Lesley, p. 136; Buchanan, b. xiv. 30.

thousand armed men of the Douglasses and Hamiltons drawn up in the yard before the palace, and preparing to set out on an expedition against the thieves of Liddesdale. He watched for the Bastard, who at length appeared, walking out from the area unarmed and with a short cloak, and entered the dark archway over the gate as if proceeding to the palace. That dark passage was fitted for the deed, and Stewart, springing upon his victim, dealt him six desperate stabs with his dagger-knife, some of which almost penetrated to his vitals, while the others were slighter wounds in consequence of the cloak with which Hamilton's body was covered, and the doublings he made to avoid the thrusts. Having, as he thought, despatched his enemy Stewart mingled with the armed crowd; but a cry among the followers of Hamilton arose, who thought the deed had been committed by the Douglasses, and the two clans would have rushed into instant and deadly conflict, had not some wiser persons ordered the gates to be shut, and a search to be commenced for the murderer. He was soon found with the bloody weapon in his hand. He confessed the deed, and only expressed regret that his victim survived, and was likely to recover, exclaiming, "Fye on the feeble hand that could not effect what the heart thought, and was determined to do!" He was put to the torture to wring from him a confession of his motives, or the names of the persons who had employed him; but his only answer was one of wild fanaticism—he was a servant of God, he said, and sent by him to commit that deed. After having been tormented for the space of a month with vindictive cruelty, in which, among other inflictions, he was led about the city naked, and had his flesh torn by hot pincers, and his right hand lopped off, he was at length executed. As for Sir James Hamilton, the most blood-thirsty man of that savage period, one whose death few would have regretted, he survived the infliction of the assassin's knife, but only to perish some years after by a more righteous and ignominious doom.¹

During this year (1527) every event seemed to confirm the Douglas ascendancy and increase the power of its head. Beaton the chancellor, a more able politician than himself, was once more his ally and worked in subserviency to his purposes. The queen was reconciled to him, and compelled to feel that her best wisdom consisted in submission to his authority. Henry of England was ready to support him, and the able and powerful Wolsey was his correspondent. Having now no rival to share his power

or dispute his authority, Angus turned his attention to the suppression of public disorders, and by the rude vigour of his administration he succeeded in quelling the Border outlaws and restoring a show of order among the wild clans of the Highlands. It would have been better still if most of those evils which he redressed had not mainly originated in his own selfish ambition. But for years and even for centuries an undercurrent had been silently going on that was now to increase into a ground-swell, in which these feuds and factions upon the surface were to burst or pass away like bubbles. In 1528 the Reformation of Scotland may be said to have commenced, by which not events alone but the national character itself was to be transformed, purified, elevated, and fitted for a higher destination than the nations of the sixteenth century could have surmised. In that change old things were to pass away; all things were to become new.

The most conspicuous personage in this great movement, the one who was not only its earliest agent but also one of its martyrs, was Patrick Hamilton, son of Hamilton of Kincavel and nephew of the Earl of Arran, while by his mother he was related to the Duke of Albany. This noble descent, which so closely allied him to the royal family, ensured to Patrick both wealth and promotion, whatever might be his course of life; and accordingly while still very young he was nominated to the abbacy of Ferne, by which he was entitled to its revenues without discharging the duties of an abbot. A studious life was his choice, and after obtaining such instruction as Scotland could furnish he went abroad for the purpose of completing his education in the universities of Germany, where he quickly attracted the attention of Luther, Melancthon, and others of the German reformers, who doubtless foresaw in his gentle, virtuous character and ardent spirit of religious inquiry the means by which his countrymen might be enlightened in the principles of the Reformation. It is evident, indeed, that if Patrick Hamilton had in his own country been conversant with the doctrines of Resby, Crawar, and their numerous successors, a single step was sufficient to advance him into the full, mature Lutheranism of the period. Even thus early, also, his zeal for religious truth was signalized by his bold open advocacy of its principles, and he was the first who introduced the practice of public theological disputations at the college of Marburg. A career that was to be so brief as his was commenced early, for when little more than twenty-three years old he returned to Scotland; and although well aware of the statute *de comburendo heretico*, and the promp-

¹ Lesley, p. 139; Buchanan, b. xiv. 31.
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titude with which it would be put in action, he began to preach the doctrines of the Reformation as soon as he returned home. His intellectual character, also, although he was so young, was well fitted, independently of birth, station, and other political circumstances, to command attention and respect, for, according to the testimony of John Knox, "he was, besides his godly knowledge, well learned in philosophy, he abhorred sophistry, and would [willed] that the text of Aristotle should have been better understood and more used in the schools than then it was; for sophistry had corrupted all as well in Divinity as in Humanity." His summary of Christian doctrine, which was published in a tract commonly called *Patrick's Places*, a translation of which from the Latin is given in Knox's *History of the Reformation in Scotland*, justifies this high character, and shows how clearly he had apprehended and how forcibly and briefly he could express those opinions that now constituted his chief element of life, and for which he so willingly died.

As it was impossible that such a man should not become a public preacher, it was equally so that his teaching should fail to obtain attention both from friend and enemy. Many were enlightened and convinced, while the clergy were alarmed and infuriated. Such doctrines and so taught would extend over Scotland that conflagration which was already pervading the Continent unless they were arrested; and upon Archbishop Beaton, as the metropolitan of the Scottish Church, this duty chiefly devolved. The present period was also favourable for the primate, as he was at peace with the ruling powers and not likely to be trammelled by their interference. But against such an offender as Patrick Hamilton it was necessary to proceed with caution, and Beaton therefore invited him to St. Andrews as the place where such matters of religious controversy could be best deliberated. Thither, accordingly, the reformer went; and as he was allowed full liberty he boldly propounded his opinions, while the archbishop and principal clergy agreed with him that there were many things both in the doctrine and discipline of the church that needed reformation. Still further to entrap him, Alexander Campbell, a friar described as a "man of good wit and learning," was employed to associate with him and converse with him; and on seeming to agree with Hamilton on every point of controversy, he extracted from him a sufficient amount of heresy to form the ground of a deadly condemnation. All being thus in readiness, the victim was apprehended at midnight in his chamber and hurried off a prisoner to the castle; in the morning he was tried, Campbell

himself being the chief witness against him; and he was sentenced to be deprived of all his dignities, offices, and emoluments in the church, and delivered over to the secular arm to be burned as a heretic. To prevent also the chance of rescue he was conducted to the stake on the afternoon of the same day, while the young king was persuaded to keep aloof by passing over to Ross-shire on a pilgrimage. A sentence procured by such iniquity and breach of faith was cruelly executed, for the fuel at the stake was insufficiently furnished with gunpowder to kindle it, so that the martyr suffered a painful and lingering death, exclaiming the while, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit! How long shall darkness overwhelm this realm? And how long wilt thou suffer this tyranny of men?" To Campbell, his betrayer and accuser, who indecently annoyed his last moments with clamorous exhortations to recant and invoke the Virgin, and the rehearsal of what he ought to believe, he replied, "Wicked man, thou knowest the contrary, and the contrary to me thou hast confessed; I appeal thee before the tribunal seat of Christ Jesus." It is added that in a few days after Campbell died at Glasgow under an access of frenzy and as one in despair.¹

While the Reformation was thus bursting into commencement, the chief public incident that arrested the public notice was a feeble attempt of the queen to free herself from the dominion of the Douglasses. The character of Margaret was now as low as her political power and influence; she had sided with every party and betrayed them all, and was now suspected and despised by them in return. Her present attempt was to recover her lost influence by provoking a breach of the peace with England; and for this purpose the Lord Maxwell, one of her few remaining adherents, made a hostile inroad across the Border and burned the town of Netherby. But so little were the two nations in the meantime inclined for mutual quarrel that Maxwell's deed was regarded by both as an individual outrage, and he was compelled by Angus to make atonement and reparation to Lord William Dacre, the English warden. To humble the queen and reduce her still lower, and probably also to obtain possession of the estates which formed her dowry, Angus resolved to besiege her in the castle of Edinburgh, to which she had fled for shelter along with Henry Stewart, her husband, and his brother James. On this occasion James V. was compelled to accompany the Douglasses; but when the unfortunate Margaret

¹ Knox's *History of the Reformation of Religion in the Realm of Scotland*, Lond. fol. 1644, pp. 4-6.

understood that he was present with the besiegers she surrendered the keys of the fortress and on her knees implored pardon for Henry Stewart and his brother, and would not rise till she had obtained the king's forgiveness; but to punish their boldness they were for a short time committed to ward.¹

But the time had at length come when the king was to be a free man and the lordly Douglasses to be hurled from their utmost height into the dust. James had now completed his sixteenth year, and with all the fire and impatience of youth he combined a boldness and sagacity beyond his tender age. He was assured of the adherence of Beaton, who had ingratiated himself with the Earl of Angus for the purpose of more effectually overthrowing his power, and who, the more to blind the Douglasses, had given them a sumptuous entertainment in his castle of St. Andrews, the king being in their company, and loaded them with princely gifts of lands and houses, and goodly steeds, and ornaments of gold and silver. The royal keepers were blinded to their own danger while the king and the ex-chancellor were thus preparing for their ruin. Weary of his stay in Fife, and finding his presence necessary in Lothian, the Earl of Angus repaired thither, leaving the king under the charge of three of his nearest kinsfolks; but soon after first one and then another of these departed also on business of their own, leaving none of their company with James but Douglas of Parkhead and a hundred gentlemen as a royal body-guard. No better opportunity of escape had yet occurred, and James had already made sure of Stirling Castle as his place of refuge by obtaining it from his mother, of whose dowry it formed a part, by giving in exchange for it the lands of Methven, to be erected into a lordship for her husband. Still proceeding warily in his purpose, he obtained the removal of his household from St. Andrews to the royal residence at Falkland, under the pretext of following the pleasures of the chase; and to keep up the deception he gave orders to Balfour of Ferney, the keeper of Falkland Forest, to assemble the tenantry and collect the best dogs in the country for a grand hunt on the following morning. He then went to bed at an early hour, requesting Douglas of Parkhead to do the like that they might be in readiness for the expected chase; and Parkhead, suspecting no fraud, complied. But when the watch was set and all was quiet the king rose from his couch, disguised himself in the dress of a groom, and passed to the stable unnoticed by the guards;

and a horse being saddled for him, he stole forth accompanied by two attendants, and never drew bridle till at early morning he had reached the bridge of Stirling, the gate of which he ordered to be closed behind him and made fast. He repaired to the castle, and was joyfully welcomed by the captain and garrison, who were his faithful officials. Delighted with his escape, and exhausted with excitement and a night of hard riding, the young emancipated sovereign threw himself upon a bed and was soon asleep.

But very different was the cheer of that morning in the palace of Falkland. On the previous night at eleven o'clock Sir George Douglas, the brother of Angus, who had left his post and repaired to St. Andrews to settle with the archbishop about the leases of certain lands, had returned to Falkland; and on inquiring about the king he was assured both by porters and guards that his grace had retired to his bed-chamber and must now be fast asleep—an answer with which Sir George was satisfied, so that he went to rest without further question. It was well for James that the period of his exit and that of the arrival of this grim keeper, who would have retained a limb of him at least, did not occur at one and the same moment! When the morning hour for the jovial hunt was near a hasty messenger, Peter Carmichael, the bailie of Abernethy, knocked sharply at Sir George's door and asked him, "Where is the king?" "He is in his chamber sleeping," replied the confident Sir George. "No," cried the bringer of evil tidings, rejoiced that he had not been forestalled in his office, "he has passed the bridge of Stirling!" This sharp thrust made the Douglas start to his feet; he rushed to the king's chamber-door and called, but there was no reply; he burst open the door with his foot, but only found the king's empty clothes. "Fye! treason!" he shouted, "the king is gone!"—but none could tell him whither. Some surmised that he had only stolen away to visit a lady at Bamburgh, for even thus early the king's morals had been allowed to run riot by his faithless guardians that their hold of him might be the more complete; others thought that in very truth he had betaken himself to Stirling. Sir George mounted his horse and was galloping to Bamburgh, but within two miles he met the Earl of Rothes, who assured him that the king was not there. In an agony of perplexity he despatched a messenger to the earl his brother, and in a short time Angus, Archibald Douglas his uncle, who had left his watch over the king to visit a lady at Dundee, and Sir George were in trembling, hurried consultation together at Falkland. Their only plan, which was one of desperation, was to ride

¹ Calig. iii. 3, vii. 102; Lesley, p. 140.

to Stirling with a slender train in the hope that in the vague chapter of accidents some lucky chance might restore James to their custody; but their purpose had been anticipated, and on the way they were met by a royal herald with a proclamation forbidding the Earl of Angus, Sir George Douglas, Archibald Douglas, and all their

kin, friends, and allies, to approach within six miles of the king's presence under the penalty of treason. Their pride was struck down and quelled, and in sorrowful mood they turned and rode to Linlithgow. They felt that their power had departed, and that James, from their captive, had become their master and king.

CHAPTER V.

REIGN OF JAMES V. CONTINUED (1528-1537).

Character of James V. at the commencement of his reign—The difficulties of his situation—His measures for the complete suppression of the Douglasses—They are attainted—Resistance of the Earl of Angus—Skirmishes between his party and that of the king—James besieges the castle of Tantallon—He is compelled to raise the siege—The Douglasses retreat into England—Embassy from Henry VIII.—Peace established between England and Scotland—Progress of James to the Borders—His precautions before his departure—His preparations for the expedition—Execution of John Armstrong—Invasion of the Orkneys by the Earl of Caithness—Its suppression—Treaties of different potentates for an alliance with James by marriage—His difficulties in selecting a bride—His principles in the administration of government—His alliance with the clergy and hostility to the Reformation—He establishes the College of Justice—Its members and character of its proceedings—Traitorous proceedings of the Earl of Bothwell—Border wars and aggressions—Necessity of Henry VIII. to be at peace with Scotland—Adherence of James to the see of Rome—His visit to the Highlands—Splendid sylvan palace prepared for his reception by the Earl of Athole—A lasting peace between Scotland and England ratified—Contrariety between James and Henry in religious reform—James commences a persecution of the reformers—Attempts of Henry to convert James to Protestantism—Their failure and its causes—Unsuccessful proposal for an interview between James and Henry at York—Proceedings of the Scottish parliament—Expediency of the Scottish king's marriage—James sets sail to France for the purpose—The voyage frustrated—He repeats it and arrives in France—His courtship of the Princess of Vendosme—Romantic interview of James with the princess—He adjourns to Paris and espouses the Princess Magdalen—Magnificence of the marriage—James returns to Scotland with his bride—He is accosted by English malcontents on his voyage homewards—Death of Queen Magdalen.

It was near the end of May (1528) when James emancipated himself from the power of the Douglasses, and became his own master as well as King of Scotland. He was thus as yet only sixteen years and two months old. Although so young he was already accomplished in all manly exercises, and in his proceedings he evinced a spirit that was beyond his years. The manner, also, in which he effected his escape showed such coolness, sagacity, and daring as indicated that even already he was fit to rule, and gave promise that in a few years more, when experience had ripened his faculties, his reign would be both distinguished and prosperous. But the difficulties which beset him at the commencement were so great, and so like those which had crushed the strong intellect and matured wisdom of his renowned ancestor, James I., that even already it might have been questioned whether any amount of royal talent could be successful. His finances were impoverished by the maladministration of Albany and the prodigality of his mother. The pride of the nobles, always hard of restraint even in

the most settled times, had been encouraged by the license of an interregnum, and was ready on all occasions to oppose itself to the sovereign authority, especially when administered by a stripling. But besides these internal obstacles there was the strong ascendancy of England, which had grown during the years of his minority, and was now so firmly rooted in Scotland that it seemed as if no effort could remove it. Matters were scarcely worse when James I. returned from his English captivity and undertook a task which in the end proved nothing more than a generous self-immolation. And even if these had been surmounted in the case of James V. by a singular combination of happy talent and rare good fortune, a difficulty still remained upon which he fatally stumbled, and upon which his posterity were finally to be shipwrecked. The reformation had commenced in Scotland. The church upon which his religious hopes were established, and the hierarchy in which he confided as the surest support of his throne, were now equally menaced and doomed to fall before the coming of that silent, humble,

almost invisible power which chivalrous kings are so apt to despise, and hoary statesmen to overlook or underrate. Upon the side he adopted in this coming collision, even irrespective of other circumstances, would depend the question whether his reign would be prosperous or adverse, whether he was to rise or fall.

The first measure of James after his escape from captivity was to prevent its recurrence by the coercion or overthrow of the Douglasses. Accordingly, on the 6th of July (1528) he passed from Stirling to Edinburgh, accompanied by a train of prelates and nobles, and attended by three hundred of their armed retainers. Soon afterwards a proclamation was issued that none of his subjects should hold intercourse with the Earl of Angus, his two brothers, or his uncle, and that none of their followers on pain of death should remain in Edinburgh after four o'clock in the afternoon of that day. A parliament was summoned to meet on the 2d of September. Gavin Dunbar, Archbishop of Glasgow, formerly the king's preceptor, was appointed chancellor of the kingdom instead of the Archbishop of St. Andrews, whom Angus had deprived of this office, and Lord Maxwell was appointed provost of Edinburgh. Patrick Sinclair was sent ambassador to the English court to show to Henry VIII. the changes that had occurred, and counteract the misrepresentations that might be offered by Angus and his faction, and also to propose that the truce between the two kingdoms now ready to expire should be renewed for three years longer. At this time the king's confidants were the queen his mother, Henry Stewart her husband, Lord Maxwell, and the laird of Buccleugh, while the person in whom he chiefly trusted, and who was the companion of his bed-chamber, was Sir James Hamilton, the bastard of Arran, and murderer of the Earl of Lennox. While James abode at this time in Edinburgh, the nobles who had accompanied him from Stirling kept watch nightly by turns in their armour over the palace of Holyrood, having a sufficient guard, from their apprehension of the Douglas faction, and the king himself took a part in this necessary duty. On the 14th of July, after a residence of eight days in the capital, James and his mother returned to Stirling, while the lords, his adherents, dispersed to their homes to await the opening of parliament.¹

These vigorous measures made the Earl of Angus lose heart, so that instead of confronting his enemies in the field he retired to his strong castle of Tantallon, from which he sent a mes-

senger to the Earl of Northumberland to inquire if, in case of further necessity, he should be allowed to retire to Norham. Sir George and Archibald Douglas had ventured to appear in Edinburgh with a few followers, but were attacked by Lord Maxwell the provost, who quickly put them to flight. On the assembling of the parliament in September, at which the attainder of the Douglasses was the principal question, the king was unwilling to intrust it to the members at large, among whom Angus had many partisans; he therefore committed it to six prelates and five lords of his own choosing, before whom seven articles of accusation were adduced against the delinquents. According to the partial statement of the latter these judges were all of them their enemies, while all that could be substantially adduced against them was their confederacy with England, and their having kept the king for two years against his will, and contrary to the laws of Scotland. But even before the meeting of parliament these past offences had been aggravated by fresh rebellion, which justified the severity of their punishment. Angus had been ordered to keep beyond the Spey, and surrender his brother Sir George and his uncle Archibald as hostages for his appearance to answer to the charges that were to be brought against him; but far from complying, the earl had fortified his castles and bid defiance to the royal authority, so that he was now a manifest rebel and traitor. The sentence of attainder was therefore passed, and his lands and those of his family were forfeited and divided among the king's principal adherents, the Earls of Argyle, Arran, and Bothwell, Lord Maxwell, Sir James Hamilton, and Scott of Buccleugh, the king reserving as royal property the strong castle of Tantallon, which was too dangerous a possession for a subject.²

Nothing remained but to put this sentence into execution, a task, however, of no easy accomplishment. The Douglasses were not likely to be put down without an effort by which the whole land would be shaken, and even their death-struggle would be fatal to not a few. But, animated with youthful ardour and confidence, the king in person undertook the task. The earl, however, was in the field before him, and his riders were scouring the country and wasting the estates of his enemies up to the very walls of Edinburgh, which resembled a city besieged, accompanied with the additional evils of a civil war. Among other atrocities eighty of these fleet troopers, each man having a led horse, burnt the villages of Cowsland and Cranston, declaring with savage pleasantry that they would

¹ State Papers, part iv. pp. 499-502; *Diurnal of Occurrences in Scotland* (Bannatyne Club), p. 11.

² Lesley, p. 140; State Papers.

give the king light for his journey to put them down if he set out before daybreak. This journey the king soon attempted by a march upon Coldingham, from which Angus retired; but on the same night he returned, recovered the castle, and chased the king to Dunbar. Amidst these quick and troublesome but indecisive movements a large mercantile vessel called the *Martine*, one of the best of the Scottish shipping, was driven by a storm on shore at Innerwick. The wreck was first plundered by the Douglas horsemen, and afterwards by the inhabitants of the coast; and as a large part of the valuable cargo consisted of cinnamon, the ignorant people into whose hands it fell mistook it for common bark, and used it as fuel.¹

Incensed at these delays, and at the havoc and insolence of the Douglasses, the king resolved to crush their power at headquarters by such a siege of Tantallon Castle as should be decisive. He therefore sent his military proclamations through several of the counties, and was soon at the head of an army of twelve thousand men, each man furnished with provisions for forty days. He also applied to the castle of Dunbar for artillery; and as this place, with its munitions, belonged to the Duke of Albany, he left three lords in pledge for the safe return of the cannons intrusted to his use. The ordnance he obtained on this occasion consisted of two large pieces that were signalized by the names of "Thrawn-mouthed Meg and her marrow;" the others were "two great botcards, two moyans, two double-falcons, and four quarter-falcons," with a sufficient proportion of gunpowder and stone bullets, and cannoniers to use them.² Thus provided to beat down Tantallon, James began the siege in form; but the strength of the walls and stoutness of the garrison defied all his efforts. After a fortnight of useless battering he was obliged to retire, and this he did so unskilfully that his artillery, which should have been removed the first of all, was left to follow the retreat under a very insufficient guard. Apprised of this fact the Earl of Angus at the head of 160 horse came down upon the detachment at night by moonlight, cut the handful of defenders in pieces, and made himself master of the artillery, which, however, he sent after the king with a polite message to announce that he had no ill-will to James, but only to the evil counsellors by whom he was surrounded, and who had been the causes of this present disaster. James, who was deeply grieved at the death of David Falconer, his best naval officer, the companion of Wood and the Bartons, was enraged at this act of courtesy, which he seems to have

regarded as a bitter taunt, and he swore on this occasion that while he lived not a Douglas should find harbour in Scotland.³

On returning to Edinburgh James resolved to suppress the incursions of the Douglasses by their own mode of warfare, and for this purpose sent a small but chosen body of light troops, who were to take their station at Coldingham, protect the surrounding districts, and confine the enemy within limits too narrow for their safety or subsistence. The commander chosen for this important task was the Earl of Bothwell, who, however, refused the appointment, upon which it was given to Colin Campbell, Earl of Argyle. Aided by the Homes Argyle pursued this guerilla campaign so vigorously, that the Douglasses were soon forsaken by the Hamiltons and their other allies, and obliged to make a hasty retreat into England.⁴

It might now have been expected that Henry VIII. would bestir himself in behalf of so useful an ally as the Earl of Angus; and this indeed he would have done if, as on former occasions, it had suited his own interests. But it was more desirable to renew the peace between England and Scotland, which would expire in the following year, and to prevent James from forming an alliance with Charles V., now the enemy of England and France, than to provoke a Scottish quarrel for the restoration of the fugitive Douglasses. Two English commissioners—Dr. Magnus and Sir Thomas Tempest—were accordingly sent to Scotland to negotiate the terms of a new amicable treaty between the kingdoms, while the restitution of his estates to the Earl of Angus formed only an episode in their commission and was produced in the form of a request. But even in this gentle fashion it was ineffectual, and James would grant nothing further than a remission of the sentence of death which Angus had incurred by his rebellion. Margaret, the queen-mother, to whom the commissioners also applied, was equally immovable; and instead of engaging her good offices in behalf of the earl, she now taunted the English king for his past neglect, and declared that if he had acted towards her in a more brotherly spirit she would now have been both able and willing to second his application. On the more important part of the embassy James was sufficiently compliant; he thanked Henry for his kind offices in his behalf during his minority [though it might have puzzled him to tell what these had been], and offered a peace of five years instead of three, with reparation for any

¹ Buchanan, b. xiv. 36.

² Pitscottie, p. 143.

³ Pitscottie, p. 143; Buchanan, xiv. 37; Lesley, 141.

⁴ Buchanan, xiv. 37.

injuries which the English had sustained from his subjects on the Borders. A peace to that effect was accordingly concluded at Berwick on the 14th of December (1528). One important concession, however, on which James insisted, and which was granted, was the surrender into his hands of the castles of the Douglasses, and especially of Tantallon, a rock of offence in his eyes, especially since his late defeat before its walls.¹

Having leisure in consequence of this pacification to attend to the suppression of disorders among his subjects, James resolved to make a justiciary progress among the Border districts where his presence was urgently required. Angus, who as lieutenant of the marches should have kept order with a vigorous hand, had rather winked at the lawlessness of the Border chieftains for his own ambitious purposes, and many of them acknowledged no superior but himself and were engaged to him by bonds of man-rent to that effect. It was difficult to reach such offenders, whose castles were almost inaccessible, and whose followers were numerous, well-armed, and desperate, while such was the wideness of their devastations upon both kingdoms alike that no peace could be maintained as long as they were left unbridled. It gives us a fearful idea of their license when Dr. Magnus could tell James as an unquestionable fact that the Armstrongs of Liddesdale declared "that they would be ordered neither by the King of Scots, their sovereign, nor by the King of England, but after such manner as their fathers have used before them," and that they boasted of having destroyed fifty-two parish churches in Scotland, besides their wild enterprises of a similar nature in England. The first proceeding of the king was to strike at those offenders who were highest in place and nearest in person; and accordingly William Cockburn of Henderland, and Adam Scott of Tushilaw, who was dignified with the title of "King of Thieves," both of them at that time having dared to visit Edinburgh, were tried before a justiciary court of the king and lords for "theft, reset, and maintenance of thieves, slaughter, and other crimes," and after conviction were executed and their heads fixed upon the tolbooth of Edinburgh. On the same day a still mightier offender, the Earl of Bothwell, was tried and convicted of having maintained them, and was thrown into prison, where he continued for six months. After Bothwell the Lords Maxwell and Home and the lairds of Buccleugh, Ferniehirst, Pollock, Johnston, Mark Ker, and other Border chieftains, were tried for

their participation in these offences and committed to ward.² Thus deprived of their principal leaders, the clans themselves were next to be assailed in their own fastnesses; and accordingly a great Border progress and hunt was proclaimed, for which the soldiers were commanded to muster at Edinburgh fully armed and with forty days' provisions, while the lords, barons, and gentlemen were to assemble with good dogs and everything necessary for the chase. Eight thousand men, warriors and hunters indifferently, were speedily mustered, who passed onward hunting and hawking to the Border; and in specifying the districts where their harmless sport was practised Pitscottie is careful to record that in these bounds there were slain eighteen score of harts.

But even before their principal pursuit, the man-hunt, had commenced the chief deer of the herd which was the main object of their search had walked blindly into their toils. Mention has already been made of the Armstrongs, the master thieves and spoilers upon the Border. Their chief, named John Armstrong of Gilnockie, has acquired a celebrity which that of Robin Hood has scarcely exceeded. He was the very type and model of a great Border marauder, and as such a brief notice of him at the present period can scarcely be out of place. So extensive had been his depredations that from the Borders onward to Newcastle every English proprietor was fain to pay him tribute or black-mail to be exempted from his visits, while his style of living was so splendid that when he journeyed it was with a retinue of twenty-four gentlemen well mounted and richly apparelled. On the approach of the king this Border potentate was eager to ingratiate himself into the royal favour, unmindful that James was not the Earl of Angus, or going his rounds for the collection of theft-boot. John on this occasion rode to his sovereign's presence with a train of thirty-six attendants; and the king, at the approach of this glittering cavalcade, imagined that some high English noble or foreign prince had come to visit him, and stepped forward to receive him with due honour. But when he found that it was no other than John Armstrong, the Border thief and outlaw, his rage and scorn burst forth in the couplet,

"What wants that knave
That a king should have?"

and ordered him to be led off to summary trial and execution. John, who discovered his folly too late in adventuring so far without a safe-conduct, pleaded hard for his life and with very

¹ Buchanan, xiv. 38; State Papers; Rymer, *Fœder*.

² Lesley, pp. 141, 142.

tempting offers: if forgiven he promised that he would maintain himself and forty gentlemen at his own cost, to be in constant readiness for the king's service; and that if there was any man in England, duke, earl, or baron, whom James wished to have as prisoner, he would produce him by a certain day either alive or dead. These offers were rejected with scorn, and seeing that his doom was inevitable John met it with indignant defiance. "It is folly," he cried, "to seek grace at a graceless face. But had I known this I should have lived on the Borders in despite of King Harry and you both, for I know that King Harry would down-weigh my best horse with gold to know that I were condemned to die this day." He and his attendants were forthwith hanged on the trees of a neighbouring grove; but the superstitious love of the Borderers declared that these trees from that moment withered and died, while John was elevated in their rude ballads into a national hero. Such was the dangerous patriotism of the Border! Other sharp executions signalized this royal progress, which had the usual effect of arresting for a short interval the prevalent lawlessness of the people. On returning to Edinburgh James dismissed all the Border chiefs whom he had imprisoned with the exception of the Earl of Bothwell, who was too powerful to be set at liberty.¹

But while James was suppressing violence in one remote portion of his dominions the evil apparently was only transferred to break out in another quarter; and in May (1529) the Earl of Caithness and Lord Sinclair made an attempt to conquer the Orkneys and separate them from the Scottish dominion, as if they had been newly-discovered islands. They accordingly passed over with an army, but were vigorously opposed by James Sinclair, governor for the king, these islands having been in subjection to the crown of Scotland for more than fifty years. The Orcadians also were hearty in their allegiance and hostile to the invaders, whom they defeated; and such was their religious enthusiasm that they believed they saw the bodily presence of their patron, Saint Magnus, joining in the conflict and leading them to victory. The Earl of Caithness, instead of winning an island sovereignty, was slain, five hundred of his soldiers were killed or drowned, and Lord Sinclair and the rest were made prisoners.²

As the contentions of England, France, and Germany were still continued it was of some importance to the belligerent powers to ally themselves with Scotland by a royal marriage.

Henry VIII., as we have seen, had long contemplated a union between James and his daughter Mary; but if he had ever been in earnest about such a measure his contention with the pope about a divorce from Catherine his queen, and his desire to have a son of his own to succeed him, must have abated his desire to have the King of Scots for his son-in-law and heir. He could not, however, be indifferent to the subject of his nephew's marriage, whether the bride might be German or French, as such an alliance might ensure him either a constant adherent or troublesome enemy. The subject of James' marriage and the partner he might choose was now therefore the question of importance, as the young king had reached a marriageable age, and for two years it formed the chief mark of political negotiation, the particulars of which are too tedious and complex for a specific account. One important aim of the Emperor Charles V., against whom Francis and Henry were now united, was to prevent an alliance of James with either of these parties, and for this purpose he offered as a wife to the King of Scotland his own sister, the widowed Queen of Hungary. But she was herself averse to the match, and the proposal came to nothing. It was now the turn of France to make offers, which was done through the Duke of Albany; and he proposed as a bride for his nephew the Duchess of Urbino, a relation of his own; but although both Henry and Francis were favourable to the project it also proved abortive. After this failure Charles again entered the competition, and with a more tempting offer: it was the hand of his niece, the daughter of Christiern II., the deposed King of Denmark, with the kingdom of Norway for her dower; but as such a union would have brought James into hostile collision with Frederick, the present occupant of the Danish throne, with whom he was at peace; and as Norway would have to be conquered before he could possess it, the chance was too desperate and the acquisition too remote and valueless to obtain his assent. A national alliance, offensive and defensive, with Austria was not to be hazarded against that with France, which centuries of usage had confirmed, and these matrimonial negotiations ended without results. A more substantial treaty of the period was one connected with the national commerce, which had a more favourable termination. Among the wise negotiations of James I. was one with the Netherlands, in which a treaty of mutual advantage in their commercial intercourse was ratified which was to last for a hundred years; and as that time was now on the point of expiring, Sir John Campbell of Lundy, Sir David Lyndsay of the

¹ Pitscottie, p. 145; *Border Ballads*; Buchanan, xiv. 39; Lesley, p. 143.

² Lesley, p. 141.

Mount, the poet and lion-king, and David Panter were sent in embassy to Brussels to negotiate a renewal for a hundred years longer. Charles V. was himself there with the Queen of Hungary, who had now succeeded to the government of the Netherlands, and by these august personages the Scottish ambassadors were favourably received, and the new treaty for which they applied confirmed.

As James advanced in years he evinced more distinctly the principles on which his government was to be carried on and the spirit that was to animate it. In the administration of justice and the maintenance of order he was as relentless as James I. Like him, too, he was resolved to suppress the aristocracy and reduce them within the bounds of law and obedience, or perish in the attempt. His first trial, that had succeeded in the banishment of the Douglasses, encouraged him to persevere; and besides compelling the Earl of Bothwell to flee from the kingdom he had deprived the Earl of Crawford of his lands, imprisoned the Earl of Argyle, disgraced the Earl of Moray and Lord Maxwell, and cast the unworthy Sir James Hamilton from his favour. These were spirited and daring deeds for a Scottish king to execute, even though the offenders had fully merited their punishment. But most unfortunate it was for him that while he thus arrayed such an influential body against him, he had none better to counterpoise it than the Scottish clergy. At an earlier period, when the clerical character was higher and its ghostly predominance over the minds of men more complete, such a resource would have been availing as a check to the power of the nobles; but while the Scottish priesthood had made so little advance in learning that they were still the most illiterate in Europe, they were corrupted in an inordinate degree with those vices which generally characterized the clergy at the commencement of the Reformation, and by which they had lost the confidence and respect of all classes of the laity alike. Their avarice, their sensuality, and their pride; the open effrontery with which they sought rich livings in the church for their illegitimate sons, and titled, influential husbands for their daughters; and their unscrupulous simony, by which they converted the church into a market where the souls of men were bought and sold, had already produced in Scotland that inevitable reaction of which the Reformation was the result. It was unfortunate for James that he could not perceive that he had cast in his lot with a falling party and could only share in their overthrow. Much has been said of the necessity of his position, much even of his wisdom in making such an election; but

with ordinary sagacity he might have perceived that the clerical order had lost its prestige, and could no longer be a support but an encumbrance to the throne. It was unfortunate that he could not recognize the increasing energy of the new cause and venture to identify himself with its interests, in which case he would have found himself at the head of a party strong enough to ensure him the victory. But it was not every king of this period who had wisdom enough to follow the examples of Frederick I. of Denmark, Gustavus Vasa of Sweden, or even Henry VIII. of England; and instead of being marshalled onward by royal leading and support, the Scottish Reformation was obliged to find its way not only unsupported by sovereigns but even opposed to them.

But James, while discarding the support of the nobility, in which he wholly differed from his father, was anxious to endear himself to the people, and in this he was so successful that he was hailed by popular acclamation as King of the Commons and King of the Poor. And for this he was well fitted both by physical endowments and natural disposition. He was handsome, strong, and active, fearless of danger, and a perfect master of his weapons; while his love of daring or eccentric adventure, if not always commendable or kingly, was carried out with such energy that the tales of his wondrous deeds, his liberality, and condescension were the favourite themes of the Scottish peasantry, who were too ready in the success of such achievements and the charms of such intercourse to lose sight of their propriety. In this way he possessed all the ingratiating frankness, gallantry, and love of frolic attributed to his uncle, "Bluff King Hal," without his overbearing temper or capriciousness. But little could this love of the commons avail him while the middle class in Scotland was still so small and uninfluential. All this popularity was but a noisy shout which died with the breath that gave it utterance. That which in other countries would have created armies and quelled opposition or confirmed a royal despotism, could in his case create nothing but a passing pleasure or wonderment. The blast of the feudal trumpet sounding to the military muster could at any time call away these rude admirers to the banners that claimed their allegiance, whether they were displayed for the king or against him.

It was partly to break the authority of the aristocracy and emancipate the people from their control that James in 1532 introduced a change in the national legislation by the establishment of the College of Justice. Hitherto, when every feudal baron had exercised heritable jurisdiction

and held his own court, their decisions were frequently the dictates of tyranny and caprice rather than justice or common sense; and although there was a right of appeal from them to the king and the privy council these headquarters of justice were frequently too remote or too difficult of access for the appellants of a baronial court. In many cases, also, the expense, and even the danger incurred by a protest against these feudal tribunals made them be endured as a necessary evil, and men quietly went up the gallows ladder in order "to please the laird." The College of Justice, the plan of which was suggested by the example of the parliament of Paris, and first proposed in Scotland by the Duke of Albany, was established by a decree of the three estates on the 17th of May. It was composed of fourteen judges, of whom one-half were selected from the clergy and the other from the laity, with a president over them, who was always to be a clergyman. But when he pleased the chancellor of the kingdom might preside over them, and in cases of difficulty the king might send three or four members of the privy-council to assist their proceedings and influence their votes. In this way feudal despotism was only exchanged for royal interference. The first working of the institution is thus characterized by Buchanan:—"At first much utility was expected from the equal distribution of justice by these judges; but the events which followed did not answer the expectations which had been formed; for in Scotland, as there are almost no laws except acts of parliament, and these in general not fixed, but temporary, and as the judges, as much as they can, hinder the passing of statutes, all the property of the subject is intrusted to the will of fifteen men, who evidently possess a perpetual tyranny, because their will alone is law."¹ Even Pinkerton, in whose eyes Buchanan as an historical authority is odious, is obliged to confess "that this satire might have some justice when Buchanan wrote." Indeed there was no visible purification of the stream of justice after it had begun to flow from this new fountain, while the selection of one-half of its judges from the clerical order made it naturally an opponent to the Reformation, the progress of which it retarded. It was not until 1584 that the College of Justice was deprived of its priestly element by a decree prohibiting all parochial ministers from holding a seat in it under pain of deprivation, that they might wholly attend to their spiritual offices.

Although the peace with England was still continued, there were symptoms to show that it

was in the utmost degree precarious. Henry VIII. still maintained his intrigues against the Scottish independence, in which he was seconded not only by the banished Douglasses, but also by the fugitive Earl of Bothwell, who had found refuge in England. As for the Earl of Angus, he was now the settled pensionary of England to the amount of a thousand pounds yearly, and for this he had recognized Henry as his prince and sovereign, and as the supreme lord of Scotland, to whom he gave his oath of allegiance, and whose cause he was ready to support against his own king and country with all his means and influence. Bothwell, who was indignant at the treatment of the Scottish nobles and his own injuries at the hand of James, was as ready as his fellow exile to become rebel and traitor, and his efforts "for relieving of his heart and stomach against the Scottish king" showed how light with him in comparison was every other aim. He offered to serve Henry in his wars against Scotland with a thousand gentlemen and six thousand commons, and become the King of England's true subject and liegeman; and had no doubt that from the discontent of the Scottish lords Henry in a brief space should be crowned in the city of Edinburgh.² These overtures of the traitors were naturally followed by Border incursions from the side of England, in which the Douglasses took a prominent part and conducted themselves with rancorous hostility, while James to meet the storm divided the military array of Scotland into four portions, who were appointed by turns to guard the marches under the Earl of Moray, now appointed lieutenant of the kingdom. The Border warfare was now commenced in earnest, although the two kingdoms were still at peace, and it was prosecuted with all the virulence that had characterized it in earlier times. Among the incursions on both sides the English destroyed a few Scottish hamlets, and the Scots in reprisal burned down a village within three miles of Warkworth, so that the Earl of Northumberland, residing at the latter place, had light enough to dress himself at midnight by the blaze of the burning houses. The earl in revenge attempted to burn Kelso, but failed, although he gave Branxholm, the abode of Scott of Buccleugh, to the flames; and Scott in return, accompanied by some of his Border allies, made an inroad into England, wasted the country, and after defying the English troops, who did not venture to attack him, returned home enriched with plunder.³ Thus, without the formality of

¹ Buchanan in Aikman's *History of Scotland*, vol. i. p. 306; *Acts of the Parliaments of Scotland*, vol. ii. pp. 335, 336; Lesley, p. 146.

² State Papers; Letter from the Earl of Northumberland to Henry VIII. in 27th December, 1531.

³ Buchanan, xiv. 44; State Papers; Letters of Northumberland to King Henry; Lesley, p. 145.

a proclamation of war, or even the allegation of injury, the Borders of both countries were alternately overrun and desolated with fire and sword, while their respective sovereigns stood aloof, keenly watching every change. But as such a kind of warfare was indecisive and unprofitable, both kings were soon weary of it, and Francis, their mutual ally, undertook to mediate between them. James complained on this occasion, and with justice, of the readiness of the French king to sacrifice the old Scottish alliance to his new negotiations with England, and two embassies were sent from France before a truce was ratified between the two kingdoms. Even then, also, although it was to come into operation in June, it was retarded by so many hostile obstacles that it did not commence until October. But, indeed, a change of circumstances had now made Henry VIII. as desirous of a peace with Scotland as he had formerly been for war. By his divorce of Catherine and marriage with Anne Boleyn he had bid defiance to the papal see; and while Charles V., by this repudiation of his aunt, had become the confirmed enemy of Henry, the pontiff was desirous of uniting the sovereigns of Christendom for the punishment of the heretic king. It was of much importance that Scotland should be secured for such a purpose, and accordingly Clement VII. used every art to keep James steadfast in the faith and arm him against the contagion of his uncle's example. On the preceding year James had eulogized the kindness of this pontiff as having exceeded that of all his predecessors; and he was now anxious to show that he was not ungrateful for such a distinction. In a parliament, therefore, held in May (1533) he announced his firm allegiance to the holy see, and his purpose to enforce throughout his dominions the statutes of the church against heretics.¹ No one who knows the dogmatic imperious character of Henry can doubt that this resolution would make James his enemy, and that sooner or later their difference would become a subject of open and deadly arbitration.

It was about this time that the king, in making a royal progress through his dominions, went to the Highlands to have a hunt in Athole, being accompanied by the queen-mother and an ambassador from the pope. The reception which the Earl of Athole had prepared for them gives us a high idea of that nobleman's poetical imagination and princely magnificence and liberality. By his orders a hunting-lodge, or rather palace, had sprung up in the wilderness as if by enchantment. It was made of green timber twined with birches in full foliage, and at

each of its four corners was a lofty tower three stories high; it was furnished with an embattled gate, portcullis, drawbridge, and moat in the style of a fortified royal residence, but of the same sylvan materials, while its site was the centre of a fair meadow. But within the floor was carpeted with flowers as if it had been a rich garden; and while the walls of the apartments were hung with fine tapestry and arras of silk they were lighted by windows of stained glass. Nor were the accommodations of these enchanted halls inferior to their magnificence, so that the king was as sumptuously entertained as if he had been in one of his own palaces. A large staff of attendants waited on the guests; a throng of purveyors, cooks, bakers, and other functionaries prepared the means of enjoyment; while every necessary of good eating and drinking, and even every luxury that could be procured throughout Scotland, made the banquets as rich, as plentiful, and elegant as the noblest state feasts that Edinburgh could have furnished. There were even artificial ponds for all kinds of fresh-water fish, and every delicacy of this kind could be angled for in the way of amusement or for the gratification of the palate. Here the king and his suite resided for three days, each day's entertainment costing a thousand pounds, at that time a sum of tenfold greater value than at present, and the papal ambassador himself, accustomed as he had been to the magnificence and luxury of Italy, was astonished that such sumptuous living could be found in Scotland, and far more especially in an obscure nook of the barbarous Highlands. But his astonishment had not yet ceased: no sooner had they left this palace in the wilderness than its owner made it a bonfire signal of their departure by committing it to the flames. "I marvel, sir," cried the Italian, "that you could suffer yon fair place to be burned, in which your grace has been so well lodged." "It is the use of our Highlanders," replied the king with a smile, "though they be never so well lodged, to burn their lodging when they depart."²

Although a truce had been established between Scotland and England in October, 1533, it was only to continue for a year, and to give time for the arrangement of a more lasting pacification. This, however, was difficult as long as the Douglasses were harboured in England and encouraged by its sovereign. Among their deeds against their native country they had seized and garrisoned the castle or fortalice of Edrington within the Scottish border; but as James had determined that none of their family should find a shelter within his dominions he

¹ Lesley, pp. 145, 146.

² Pitscottie, pp. 146, 147.

had made the surrender of this paltry fortress a condition, without assent to which no peace between the kingdoms could be established. This concession at last was reluctantly made by England, and in May, 1534, a solemn peace was established to last during the lives of the two kings, but to terminate a year after the decease of him who should die first. On Edrington being surrendered to the Scots the Earl of Angus, his brother, and uncle were to be permitted to reside in England. Its ratification gave great joy to both nations, whose interests, without their precisely knowing how or wherefore, were gradually approximating into a closer and more Christian relationship. Soon after Henry sent to James the order of the Garter by the hands of Lord William Howard, brother of the Duke of Norfolk; the Emperor Charles V. also sent to him that of the Golden Fleece, and Francis I. the order of St. Michael.¹

In England and Scotland as well as throughout Europe the subject of religion formed the great basis of political question and controversy: it was now, indeed, a period when the overthrow or establishment of a throne depended upon its holder's belief in the infallibility of the popedom and the mystery of transubstantiation. But on this great subject Henry and James had adopted different views, and were now following them out in their respective characters; and while the King of England was stripping the pope of his authority, but only to clothe himself with it and persecute papists and Lutherans alike for denying his infallible right to enact doctrines at pleasure—James was falling back more earnestly upon the old creed and preparing to risk all in its defence. He now found that his land was abounding with Lutherans, Lollards, or whatsoever they might be called, who, during the slumber of the church and the engrossing character of late political events, had multiplied without check; and to arrest their progress might not only prevent the growth of a dangerous power, but compound for his own personal sins, which were neither few nor venial. Besides, he had chosen his part and pledged himself to be the persecutor of heretics. An ecclesiastical court was therefore erected in Holyrood presided over by the Bishop of Ross, while James himself, completely clothed in scarlet, the costume of judicial authority, gave his presence at the trials to sanction their decision and make the secular arm be felt. With such preparations the stake was certain to be set up and the fire to be kindled. The first to suffer were David Straiton, a gentleman of good

family in Fifeshire, and Norman Gourlay, a priest; but their opinions and the particulars of their trial more properly belong to a different department of our narrative. They were committed to the flames, and the clergy rejoiced in their death. Other executions would have followed of men equally distinguished; but they were either too powerful in their friends and family to be easily reached, or not as yet sufficiently confirmed in their new principles to provoke the trial or abide the test. Some fled the kingdom, among whom were a brother and sister of Patrick Hamilton, the proto-martyr, Alexander Aless, a canon of St. Andrews, and John Macbee.

These measures were distasteful to the King of England, but from no principle of humanity, as his own persecutions sufficiently testified. But the inordinate wealth of the English Church had tempted him, and spoliation rather than persecution was for the present his principal object. In this case, however, it was necessary first of all to secure the co-operation or at least the neutrality of his royal nephew, for James might otherwise serve as a rallying-point for the discontented Romanists of England. His title to the throne of England was next to that of Mary, and the malcontents might be tempted to set her rights aside in favour of a champion so able and ready to protect them and their still powerful church. Henry attempted to obviate the danger and win James over to his side by revealing to him the true character and corruptions of the Romish hierarchy and their creed; he accordingly sent down to Scotland an unanswerable book he had published called *The Doctrine of a Christian Man*; and for the purpose of expounding its propositions the book was accompanied by Dr. Barlow, Henry's chaplain, who was to sound the Scots on the subject of reform, and even, if he could obtain permission, to preach it in their pulpits. But the volume apparently remained unread; and as for Barlow, he encountered such opposition that he pettishly characterized the country as a land of "miserable beggars and moneyless soldiers," and its priests as "the pope's pestilent creatures and very limbs of the devil."² Barlow's mission having proved an utter failure, Henry in the same year (1535) sent another envoy; but in this case his second choice was even worse and more ungracious than the first, for his ambassador was Lord William Howard, a proud, imperious noble, and of the family of him who had caused the death of James' father at Flodden. His commission was to propose a personal

¹ Lesley, pp. 148, 149; Rymer, *Fœdera*, xiv. pp. 529-538; *Diurnal of Occurrents in Scotland*, p. 19.

² State Papers, vol. v. p. 36.

interview between the two kings at York; but on announcing it James asked if he had a copy of the intended subjects of conversation to be introduced at the conference, that he might show it to his council. Howard declared that such a mode of proceeding was never heard of before. On the proposal being laid before the council the intended conference was encountered with so many obstacles, delays, and changes that it was evident there was no wish that it should take place, even though the queen-mother was urgent for such an interview. Not only were the priesthood opposed to it from the dread of the king's alienation from their cause, but the Hamiltons, from their fear that the interview might lead to James' marriage and the overthrow of their own hopes in the royal succession.¹ The Earl of Arran had died and been succeeded by his son, the future regent, while the Duke of Albany was a childless old man, so that the present head of the Hamiltons would succeed to the crown if James died without heirs. All united in representing the dangers that had awaited the kings of Scotland upon the English soil, and the impiety of abandoning the old confirmed religion in favour of a modern innovation, and bribery was employed with such as had influence with the king to stop his journey to England. These means were effectual, and Howard's mission was as fruitless as that of Barlow.

On the 7th of June during this year a parliament was held at Edinburgh, and in its enactments we can perceive how little progress had been made during a whole century of national existence. Of these the chief concerned the planting of wood and the herring fishery, both of which had still continued to be neglected. To check the lifting of cattle by the Scottish borderers from their own countrymen and selling them to the English there was a prohibition laid, not only upon the sale of cattle and sheep, but even of corn, fish, and salt to the English. In the enactments that had reference to the public security and national defence the obligation was repeated of holding weapon-shaws, and the importation of weapons, harness, and ammunition was encouraged, while the Border barons and gentlemen were required to rebuild their peels and fortalices which had been destroyed during the late commotions. As the progress of the Reformation was daily occasioning fresh alarm ecclesiastical censures were ordered to be enforced by the civil power; and an act was issued against the importation of heretical writings, especially those of Luther, and also against discussing his doctrines except for

the purpose of refuting them. But the wisest of their enactments, and the one likely to be attended with the best practical consequences, had reference to the magistracy of the burghs. Hitherto, as we have already noticed, noblemen and gentlemen had generally been elected to the provostships of the principal towns for the sake of their patronage and protection; but as the citizens were bound in return to adopt all their provost's quarrels, the funds of the burgh were in consequence often wasted and its industrial spirit arrested. To remedy these evils it was now decreed that none should be elected to the magistracy of the burghs except such as were honest and substantial burgesses.²

James was now in his twenty-fifth year, and notwithstanding his numerous matrimonial negotiations he was still unmarried. His promiscuous amours; his daring, adventurous spirit, which often hurried him, disguised and alone or with very few attendants, to places where dangers most abounded; the numerous hairbreadth escapes he had already made; and the selfishness of the Hamiltons, who rejoiced in that delay and these dangers as the promise of their own advancement, made the whole nation impatient for a lineal heir to the throne, and they were ready to welcome his union to a royal partner whether she might be native or foreigner. Of the first alternative, indeed, there was thought to be some possibility, and a rumour was noised abroad that James intended to marry a daughter of Lord Erskine, one of his numerous mistresses, who had borne him a son, afterwards the good regent Moray; and that though she was now married to Douglas of Lochleven, a divorce from her husband was in readiness, that she might be espoused to the king. James, however, preferred to have a bride from a royal family, and of all families that of France as the surest bond for the alliance of the two kingdoms, so that he sent an embassy to Francis I. to treat about a marriage with some princess of his house. He had fixed his wishes upon Magdalen, the eldest surviving daughter of the French king; but as she was consumptive and unlikely to live long or become a mother, Francis recommended in her stead Maria de Bourbon, daughter of the Duke of Vendosme, a prince of the royal blood. But here Henry interposed his evil offices both at the court of France and Scotland; and as Francis was at war with the emperor he found it difficult to gratify the wishes of James and avoid giving offence to the English king. Delays consequently arose and obstacles were multiplied that might have dragged the affair

¹ State Papers, v. p. 39.

² Acts of the Parliaments of Scotland, v. ii. p. 349.

through years of procrastination had not James resolved to take the management of it into his own hands. Having therefore hastily rigged out a few small vessels at Leith on the 26th of July, 1536, he set sail without informing any one of his intentions; and many supposed that he had repaired to England to apologize to Henry for disappointing him of the personal interview on the preceding year. A storm, however, soon cleared all doubt; for when the gale strengthened and the pilots asked whither they should direct their course, James replied, "Land me on any coast but that of England." Instead of returning he sailed round Scotland and attempted a passage to France by the western ocean; but the wind was contrary, and while he slept the ships were put about without his knowledge, so that he was obliged to land on the isle of Bute, from which he returned to Stirling. The disappointment by the alteration of the ships' course was said to be owing to the Earl of Arran, who accompanied him, and who gave the order to return while the king was asleep, that the purpose of the voyage might be frustrated; and James, who believed the report, ever afterwards regarded the Hamiltons with suspicion and dislike.¹

As his purpose had been thus announced, James resolved to visit France in a more public and kingly style. He therefore appointed a regency composed of Beaton, Archbishop of St. Andrews; Gavin Dunbar, Archbishop of Glasgow and chancellor; and the Earls of Huntly, Montrose, and Eglinton, with Lord Maxwell, to govern during his absence; and to procure an auspicious voyage he made a pilgrimage on foot from Stirling to the chapel of our Lady of Loretto, near Musselburgh. He then set sail with a squadron of five ships, accompanied by a train of nobles and three or four hundred attendants, and arrived safely at Dieppe on the 10th of September. On landing James was invited to Paris by Francis, who was in the height of his triumph on account of his recent successes over the emperor; but preferring a more romantic mode of wooing, the Scottish king resolved to visit Marie de Bourbon *incognito*, to whom his ambassadors had already made overtures of marriage by his authority. Disguising himself, therefore as a valet, and with his servant John Tennent, who played the master for the nonce, James repaired to the court of Vendosme, and endeavoured among the undistinguished crowd to have a sight of his future bride. But he did not long remain unknown; the fair lady herself had a suspicion that the King of Scotland himself was mixed

with that crowd of strangers, and she was soon enabled to recognize and single him out by means of a miniature portrait which she had procured of him from Scotland. She advanced to him, took him gracefully by the hand, and said, "Sir, you stand over far aside; therefore, if it please your grace to talk with my father or me, as you think for the present, a while for your pleasure, you may if you will." The detected valet was obliged to step forth a king; and on being introduced to the princely family of Vendosme he, in the hearty and courtly fashion of the times, "passed to the duchess and embraced and kissed her, and so he did to the duchess's daughter and to all the rest of the ladies." His arrival was the signal for tilts and tournaments, for masques and dancing, for gorgeous pageants and overflowing banquets; and for eight days he was feted and feasted as the most favoured of lovers, the most acceptable of sons-in-law.² But here the romance terminated. Either from very fickleness of heart or thinking that a still better choice might yet await him, James left the sorrowing Marie de Bourbon and passed onward to the court of France. Here the pomp of reception that welcomed him was such as made the previous displays of Picardy a mere preparative; and Francis, who saw in James the graceful renewal of his own youthful days, welcomed him as a father would a son. Of Magdalen, too, we are told—and Pitscottie's testimony is confirmed by the French historians—that "from the time she saw the King of Scotland and spoke with him she loved him so that she would have no man in life to her husband but him only." James was equally enamoured of the young princess, now only sixteen years old, and whose winning beauty—that of consumption—was of that wondrously attractive, mystical character which, while it leads to the grave, only speaks of the brightness and the bloom that lie beyond it. It was in vain that James was dissuaded from the union both by the King of France and his own councillors; and in vain was he offered the younger daughter of Francis for his bride, or any other princess he might be pleased to elect: he was urgent for his marriage with Magdalen, and on New-year's Day it was celebrated in the church of Notre-Dame. On this occasion the Kings of France and Navarre, many foreigners of illustrious name and rank, and seven cardinals graced the nuptials with their presence, while the dowry and gifts which the bride's father bestowed were worthy of his character as the most munificent of European sovereigns. The joyous season was spent in such tournaments, masques, and festive displays

¹ Buchanan, xiv. 52.

² Pitscottie, pp. 154, 155.

as France only could have exhibited.¹ It was no wonder that amidst such happiness the stay of James in France was protracted so long, for he did not take his departure till the end of April. On this occasion a convoy of French ships was added to his own squadron, and he arrived at Leith on the 19th of May, 1537. During his voyage homewards his ships were delayed by a contrary wind off Scarborough; and on this occasion, it was reported, several of the English from the shore repaired on board his ship to complain of the tyranny of their sovereign and invite him to enter England with an army, in which case they would be ready to join him. Such a visit, although little noted at the time, was not unlikely to occur. The severe proceedings of Henry were of themselves enough to drive the Roman Catholics into rebellion, while the sudden arrival of James, the vowed champion of their church and heir-presumptive to the English throne, at once pointed out the person to whom they should carry their complaints and appeal for deliverance. What answer James returned or whether he encouraged their hopes has not been recorded. We are only told of a

¹ "There was never so great solemnity seen in France in one day as was then since the time of Charles the Main [Charlemagne]. For there was such justing and tournament, both on horse and foot, in burgh and land, and also upon the sea with ships; and so much artillery shot in all parts of France, both on the land and sea, in castles, towns, and villages, that no man might hear for the raird [noise] thereof. And also the riotous banquets, delicate and costly clothings, triumphant plays and feasts, with pleasant sound of instruments of all kinds; and also cunning carvers, having the art of necromancy, to cause things appear which were not, as flying dragons in the air, shots of fire at others' heads, great rivers of waters running through the town, and ships fighting thereupon, as it had been in bullering streams of the sea, shooting of guns like cracks of thunder; and thir [these] wonders were seen by the nobility and common people. And this was made by men of ingyne for outsetting of the triumph, to do the King of Scotland and the Queen of France their master's pleasure." Pitscottie, p. 158.

threat he had uttered on passing Berwick, that if he lived a year longer he would break his spear on the breast of an Englishman.²

Nothing could exceed the fervour of welcome that awaited James and his queen on their arrival in Edinburgh. The beauty of the queen, and especially its gentle, winning character, seemed at once to take all hearts captive; and as soon as she had stepped on shore at Leith her first act was to take up a small portion of the earth in her hand and kiss it, to show her love for the country of her husband and his subjects that were to receive her as his queen. All the gladness that could be expressed by tabret and trumpet, shaum and clarion; by gorgeous attire, in which noble and knight, squire and burgess, strove to excel each other in splendour; by the streets adorned with scaffolds for pageants, and their fountains flowing with wine; and especially by joyous banquets and gallant, spear-breaking tournaments, were exhibited on this happy national occasion, wherein the people, as the poet³ of the happy masque expresses it, "were labouring for their lives to make triumph." But in less than six weeks all was changed into darkness and blackness, and the loud lamenting of a whole nation; for Magdalen, the beloved of all hearts and the object of their best hopes, lay stretched upon the bier, with the tapers lighted and the death-hymn murmured over her cold remains. She had tasted of happiness and passed away. Her death occurred on the 10th of July, and she was buried in the abbey church of Holyrood; while her death was so deeply deplored that "dule weeds," or mourning attire, was worn on this occasion for the first time in Scotland.⁴

² State Papers, v. p. 79.

³ Sir David Lyndsay of the Mount.

⁴ Buchanan, xiv. 52.

CHAPTER VI.

REIGN OF JAMES V.—CONCLUSION (1537-1542).

Anxiety of Henry VIII. on account of the marriage of James V.—Henry sends Sir Ralph Sadler as his envoy into Scotland—Instructions given to Sadler by Henry—State of the Scottish court—Queen Margaret seeks a divorce from Lord Methven—Trial and execution of the Master of Forbes—Trial and execution of Lady Glamis—Doubtfulness of her guilt—Severe fate of her supposed accomplices—Warlike preparations of James—Alarm of Henry—James negotiates a second French marriage—He espouses Mary of Guise—His devotedness to the cause of the church—Persecution of the reformers—Several of them executed—Effect of these executions—Reaction of public feeling against Cardinal Beaton and the king—Sudden arrest in the persecution of the reformers—The attachment of James to the church becomes doubtful—Henry in consequence again sends Sadler to Scotland—Secret instructions given to Sadler on the occasion—His interview with James—His endeavours to discredit Cardinal Beaton—His attempts to persuade James to enrich himself by church confiscations—He tries to procure a personal interview between James and Henry—Unsuccessful result of Sadler's negotiations—James resolves to visit the Scottish isles—His great naval preparations—His voyage—He returns with the principal island chiefs as hostages—Execution of Sir James Hamilton—His alleged crimes—Trouble of James after Hamilton's execution—Death of James's two sons—Extensive claims of James in confiscating property to the crown—Decrees to establish and enforce the authority of the church—Enactments against heretics—Self-reform enjoined upon the clergy—Measures for the national defence—Weapon-shaws resumed—Laws respecting arms and discipline—Decrees for the provision and use of artillery—Warlike preparations of James—Henry's counter-precautions—Eagerness of the Scottish clergy for war with England—They present to the king a proscription list of the reformers—Answer of James to their sanguinary proposal—Death of Queen Margaret—Proceedings of James for the improvement of his subjects—Suspicious journey of Cardinal Beaton to Rome—Sir Ralph Sadler again arrives in Scotland—James consents to an interview with King Henry at York—He fails to appear—Henry's indignation—Preparations for war between Scotland and England—Defeat of the English at Hadden-rig—James encamps against the English on Fala Moor—The nobles refuse to advance—James obliged to dismiss his army—He has recourse to the clergy—A new Scottish army advances to the Border—Discontent occasioned by the appointment of its general—Confusion and flight of the army at Solway Moss—Shame and anguish of James—His last moments and death—Proceeding of Cardinal Beaton at the death-bed of James—Character of James V.

During the absence of James in France, a period of nine months, few events had occurred to disturb the tranquillity of Scotland. But this long absence; the marriage of his nephew, and that, also, to the daughter of his great rival, Francis I., was full of alarm to the English king. By such a matrimonial union James would be more closely allied to France and Rome, and more hostile to England and the Reformation; he might become the leader of the English malcontents, whose repeated rebellions had been suppressed with difficulty; and if he should be persuaded to lead a Scottish crusade into England for the restoration of the old faith he would probably be joined by its adherents in thousands, in whose eyes the pope was a more sacred personage than their king, and piety a higher principle than patriotism. The only effectual plan by which these dangers could be averted was to divide the Scots among themselves, as he had hitherto done, so that they should be unfit for any plan of hostile combined invasion; and to impair the authority of their king by strengthening his own faction which he had already established in the midst of them. This plan, which beyond all his other plans Henry VIII. had pursued with a life-and-death steadfastness, was

put into vigorous action during the absence of James in France. His agent, Sir Ralph Sadler, one of his most sagacious statesmen, was one well fitted for the task; and it appears from this envoy's own letters that he had been despatched to Scotland in January, 1537. He was again sent after the return of James, and in his instructions he was required in his interviews with the Scottish king to assure the latter of the good-will of his uncle towards himself, and his earnest desire to maintain the peace that subsisted between his own kingdom and Scotland. He was to assure James that whatever warlike preparations Henry was making were to be directed against Rome and its faction, who intended his destruction "by hoke or by croke, by phas or nephas," and not against the Scots. He was to beseech James in the matter of religion to use his own natural understanding and acquired scholarship, but especially the word and doctrine of God, instead of placing implicit faith in the guidance of the clergy. He was to put him on his guard against the slanderous tales and misrepresentations of the emissaries of Rome, and especially of the pope, whose bull against Henry the latter declared to be "none other than a very ravening wolf under a sheep's skin."

"The practices of prelates and clerks (thus the envoy was instructed to state) be wondrous, and their juggling so crafty, as unless a man be ware thereof, and as oculte as Argus, he may be lightly led by the nose and bear the yoke, yea and (yet for blindness) not to know what he doeth." Sadler was then to urge anew the proposal of a personal conference with Henry "in any commodious place northward," towards which the two kings could travel in their summer progress and at small cost and charge. Finally he was to put James on his guard against joining the coalition at present forming between the pope, Francis, and the emperor for the overthrow of Henry as the enemy of the church, but which coalition would assuredly be ruinous to James and fatal to his kingdom if he joined it.¹ These were the chief considerations which Sadler was instructed to urge in his interviews with the Scottish king; but the more secret and questionable parts of his commission, and to which James was not to be privy, must have formed the subject of a separate paper. The conduct of James on his return from France showed that the anxiety of Henry was not without cause; for he was collecting his military resources, economizing his newly acquired treasures, and allowing the English rebels to hope for his support. All this gave ground for suspicion that his visit to France had changed his political views and secured his alliance to the coalition against the English king. But before his intentions could be indicated the death of Magdalen occurred, in consequence of which these hostile proceedings were for the time suspended. Amidst the chief characters of the Scottish court with whom the astute Sadler held intercourse was Margaret, the queen-mother. The envoy brought to her a scanty sum of money from her brother; and in return she undertook to second Henry's interests with her son by every means in her power. But a still more important object which occupied her at present was the obtaining a divorce from her third husband, Lord Methven. Whether she had contemplated the idea of a new marriage is uncertain; but of Methven she complained that he wasted her goods, kept her in poverty, and was altogether unworthy to have her affairs under his management; and she talked of retiring into a nunnery and spending the rest of her days in peace if the divorce could but be obtained. But Sadler, who knew her well, put no faith in these new purposes of mortification and devotion. Already she had showed that she only lacked the power to make her marriages as numerous as those of her brother Henry.

A perplexing trial occurred at this period which is still involved in obscurity. The powerful families of Forbes and Gordon having been at feud with each other, John, the eldest son of Lord Forbes, had during the preceding year been accused by the Earl of Huntly of a design to shoot the king with a culverin at Aberdeen, and in consequence of the charge had been committed to prison at Edinburgh. Six months afterwards, and while James was in France, the father was also imprisoned and compelled to give a security of ten thousand marks for his own appearance and that of his son when called upon for trial. After a year of interval the trial was held on the 3d of July. Although the charge was neither sufficiently substantiated nor the witnesses of unexceptionable character, the Master of Forbes was sentenced to be hanged, drawn, and quartered as a traitor. He was in the interest of the Douglasses, and had married the sister of the Earl of Angus; and besides his turbulent, flagitious character, he had been the murderer of the gallant Seton of Meldrum. His death, therefore, was not regretted, although he was generally held innocent of the crime for which he was executed; and Strachan, the principal evidence against him, is supposed either to have instigated him to the design, or falsely laid it to his charge at the suggestion of the Earl of Huntly. The only mercy allowed him was a commutation of his sentence from hanging to decapitation; and on the scaffold, although he denied the treacherous design of killing the king he acknowledged that he deserved to die for the murder of the Laird of Meldrum. That James himself was afterwards persuaded of the innocence of the Master of Forbes was shown by the favour he extended to his brother, to whom he restored the forfeited estates besides marrying him to a rich ward of the crown.²

Only three days after that of Forbes a more tragic execution followed. It was that of Janet Douglas, sister of the Earl of Angus. She was first married to Lord Glamis, and on his death she took for her second husband Archibald Campbell of Skipnish, second son of the Earl of Argyle. But although reckoned one of the most discreet as well as beautiful of Scottish high-born dames, she had not escaped either the tongue of calumny or the dangers of the political tribunal; and on the downfall of her family, when to bear the hated name of Douglas was of itself accounted treasonable, she had been tried for participating in the traitorous designs of her brother Angus, and intercommuning with his faction. But worse than this was the charge brought against her of having taken the life of

¹ State Papers, vol. v. p. 81.
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² Pitcairn's *Criminal Trials in Scotland*, vol. i.
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Lord Glamis, her husband, by poison, when her complicity in the designs of the Douglasses could not be established. On the first of these charges she had been repeatedly harassed, and her goods and property had been forfeited to the crown; and on account of this persecution she had retired from public life and spent her time in solitude. But even this could not shield her from her enemies, and she was now arrested and brought to trial not only for treasonably intercommuning with the Earl of Angus and his adherents, but for conspiring the king's death by poison. It is certain that such a charge against a helpless member of the obnoxious family was tantamount to condemnation; but, on the other hand, it has been thought that love for her brother, feudal hatred, and the wrongs inflicted upon her noble house were of themselves sufficient to have perverted all her better feelings, and incited her to the crimes that were laid to her charge. Her supposed accomplices were her husband, Campbell, her son, Lord Glamis, a stripling only sixteen years old, John Lyon, a relation of her first husband, and an old priest; and though they were all put to the rack they confessed nothing, with the exception of young Glamis, who from the fear of torture made a confession which he afterwards retracted. Before her judges Lady Glamis appeared with the confidence of innocence and the wonted courage of her house; but she was pronounced guilty and sentenced to be burned at the stake, the usual punishment in Scotland for females of rank in all cases of treason and murder. The pitiless sentence was executed; and her blooming youth, for she was still young, her uncommon beauty, and the masculine courage with which she underwent her doom, excited universal commiseration. Of the other persons accused Archibald Campbell was imprisoned in the castle of Edinburgh, and in attempting to escape, the rope was found too short, so that he fell and was dashed to pieces at the bottom of the rock. John Lyon was hanged. Alexander Makke, who was accused of having prepared the poison and sold it to John Lyon, was deprived of his ears and banished. Lord Glamis, who was to have been executed in consequence of his own confession, was respited probably on account of his youth; but he was imprisoned until after the king's death, when he was restored to his family honours and possessions. The chief accuser, William Lyon, also a relation of Lord Glamis, when he saw the ruin in which he had involved the whole family by his calumnious falsehoods, repented when too late, and confessed his offence to the king; but his confession obtained neither mercy for the accused nor the restoration of their

estates, nor even apparently a righteous punishment for himself.¹ Unless James at this time was maddened with suspicion and ready to dread the worst from the Douglasses, it is difficult to account for these terrible executions while he was still lamenting the recent death of his beloved Magdalen, without supposing that Lady Glamis was in some measure guilty notwithstanding the proofs of her innocence.

After the death of his queen James resumed those warlike preparations that had been only for a short time suspended. The care of his artillery seemed to be his chief object—that effective arm of warfare which his father had so carefully cultivated, but the advantage of which he had so recklessly thrown away at Flodden. The cannon contained in the castles of Dunbar, Tantallon, and other royal strongholds were put into a state of readiness for service, and this was the case especially at Dunbar, the strongest barrier of the kingdom against English invasion. To this fortress it appears the king was accustomed to repair at least twice a week, quietly and at midnight, followed only by six attendants, and after remaining there for a day or two he usually returned to Edinburgh at night in the same private manner. This alarming symptom could not escape the notice of the English spies in Scotland, and Henry was speedily advertised of these movements and assured that the artillery in each of these fortresses was in excellent condition. It has been supposed that in these preparations James had nothing higher in view than an attempt for the recovery of Berwick; but his adherence to the cause of Rome, and the troubled state of England, which at any time might offer the highest advantages to his ambition, were more probably his incentives to such diligence. Nothing could have been more favourable to the views of Francis and the pope than a civil war in England, with James and a Scottish army at its head. Even prophecies, also, were not wanting to urge him on in such attempts, and rhyming productions were circulated through England, mixed with libellous songs and pasquinades against Henry, all pointing to James's speedy accession to the English throne. Even the time of this event was also pointed out, and the year 1540 was assigned as the date when the whole island was to be united under one sovereign. These rude poetical attempts, inspired in all likelihood by the hopes or the discontent of the Roman Catholics in England, James affected to treat with contempt, and ordered all the copies of them that had crept into Scotland to be destroyed; but still he could not be insensible to

¹ Pitcairn's *Criminal Trials*, vol. i. p. 187-203.

them as the indications of his uncle's unpopularity as well as his own favourable acceptance with a great portion of the English. These soothsayings, however, were at last silenced by the birth of Henry's son, afterwards Edward VI., in October, 1537.

But whether James might entertain hopes of the English crown or not, it was necessary for him in the meantime to secure his royalty already in possession by a marriage that might give him an heir and successor. Only a few months, therefore, after the lamented death of Magdalen he again applied to France for a royal bride, his choice on this occasion being Mary, daughter of the Duke of Guise and widow of the Duke of Longueville. Why he did not revert to the disappointed object of his earlier love, the Princess of Vendosme, is answered by Pitscottie, who informs us that after the king's marriage to the daughter of Francis she "took such displeasure and melancholy, that she within short while took sickness and died." The ambassador of James to France for this second marriage was David Beaton, Abbot of Arbroath, whom the King of France for former services had rewarded with the bishopric of Mirepoix, and who was now elevated to the rank of cardinal. The prelate was afterwards joined on this occasion by Lord Maxwell and the Master of Glencairn. The marriage treaty was speedily concluded, and before James's year of mourning had expired Mary of Guise, escorted by the Admiral of France and Lord Maxwell the Admiral of Scotland, landed in Fife, and was met by the king at St. Andrews, in the cathedral church of which city their marriage was immediately after celebrated.

By this union with the able but domineering and persecuting house of Guise, James had confirmed his entire allegiance to Rome, and announced himself its champion to the death. He was now the uncompromising enemy of the protestantisms of England and Scotland alike, and a short time would decide whether he or the new creed should prove the stronger. His proceedings also from this period, while they testified his devotedness of purpose, only tended further to degrade and enfeeble that cause which he blindly sought to establish. His zeal, indeed, could scarcely be respected when it was found so closely allied with sordid selfishness, nor the church itself be strengthened when its highest offices were filled with his own natural children. Being unable to provide a maintenance for the offspring of his numerous amours he inducted them into the wealthiest abbacies and priories of the kingdom, and in this manner the monasteries of St. Andrews, Holyrood House, Melrose, Kelso, and Coldingham were bestowed upon

his illegitimate children, in whose name, until they reached the age of maturity, he could draw the revenues into his own coffers. But still worse than this was the circumstance that James had selected David Beaton for his chief counselor and adviser. This Abbott of Arbroath, Bishop of Mirepoix, and cardinal, was now so powerful in the national council and so influential in the church that he soon after was appointed Archbishop of St. Andrews and legate *a latere*, while his talents were of so profound and of such a commanding character that few could fathom his wiles or confront his boldness. When the civil and spiritual power were in such close alliance the union was ominous to the Reformation, and the persecution which had been suspended for five years broke out afresh, and with greater severity than before. Accordingly, a short time after the commencement of the year 1539, Keillor, a Blackfriar; Dean Thomas Forrest, vicar of Dollar and canon regular of St. Colm's Inch; John Beveridge, a Blackfriar; Duncan Simson, a priest of Stirling; and Robert Forrester, a gentleman of that town, were condemned as heretics and executed on the same day upon the castle-hill of Edinburgh, their judges being Cardinal Beaton and William Chisholme Bishop of Dunblane, both of them open and notorious profligates and the fathers of illegitimate families. But these dreadful exhibitions were not confined to the capital: in Glasgow also, during this year, Russell, a Grayfriar, and Kennedy, a young man only eighteen years of age, were convicted of heresy and committed to the flames. These were sharp and daring extremities on the part of the cardinal who perpetrated and the king who sanctioned them; but they only hastened the progress of that cause which they tried to retard. A spirit of inquiry was awakened in behalf of those doctrines to which the sufferers so triumphantly clung at the stake and amidst the flames; and from the ashes of every single martyrdom a crowd of converts were certain to spring up. It could not fail to be noticed also that a large majority of those who suffered were of the priesthood—men who were therefore best fitted to estimate the character of the church which they had abandoned, and to attest the fervour of their sincerity and the strength of their conviction in behalf of the new. But something more sudden in its nature and more prompt in its hostile reactions was kindled by these unwonted executions. It was Scottish nationality and pride. Who was this Beaton—the half-Frenchman—the descendant of a family of Picardy, that he should thus lord it over a land that had sheltered his fathers, and shed the blood of a people among whom he had no ties of relation-

ship? And by what new rights of kingship, as yet unknown in Scotland, did James himself give command or allowance to such strange and sanguinary proceedings? These were questions fitted for the multitude at large, and in the deaths of James and Beaton they found a fearful reply.

When the work of persecution had thus commenced it might have been expected to go onward in full career; and thus it had been in other countries where the Reformation mustered in greater numbers and had assumed a more formidable appearance than it had yet done in Scotland. Nor were Beaton and his coadjutors likely to pause from considerations either of clemency or faintheartedness. But after this handful of victims had been despatched the hierarchy suddenly stopped short in their proceedings, and allowed the Reformation to go onward unchecked. It is not unlikely that the popular feeling in Scotland—a feeling always terrible to its kings and statesmen—had daunted these churchmen, and compelled them to bethink themselves of their own safety. Even James also appears to have felt that in these proceedings they had transgressed the bounds of political prudence, and was willing to abate their zeal. Such were the symptoms he exhibited soon after, as we learn from a communication addressed by Sir William Eure to Lord Cromwell. Sir William, as commissioner on the part of England for the settlement of the Borders, met with two Scottish commissioners at Coldstream on the 21st of January, 1540, and after adjusting the affairs that brought them together, Thomas Bellenden, one of the Scottish commissioners, gave the Englishman an account which the latter thought worthy of transmitting to his employer. According to the statement of Bellenden James himself was anxious for a half reformation—an improvement of the character of the clergy, and a reform of their misdemeanours and abuses; and in consequence of this feeling an interlude had been played with his concurrence on the feast of the Epiphany at Linlithgow, at which his whole council, both spiritual and temporal, had been present. The scope of this play was an exposure of the corruptions in religion, the presumption of bishops, the collusion of the spiritual or consistory courts, and the malpractices of priests—affording a probability that this was no other than the celebrated “Three Estates” written by Sir David Lyndsay. As soon as the entertainment had closed James addressed himself sharply to the Archbishop of Glasgow, who was chancellor, and the other prelates assembled, exhorting them to reform their practices and manner of living, otherwise he would send six of the

proudest of them to his uncle of England, and according as Henry treated them so would he also deal with their brethren who remained in Scotland. Upon this the chancellor rose and timidly answered that one word out of his grace’s mouth should suffice them to be at his commandment, to which James angrily replied that he would gladly bestow any words of his mouth that could amend them. Bellenden then stated that the king meant to exclude all priests from political office and authority, and he requested to have for the private use of his royal master a copy of the acts of the English parliament against the Papists, as he meant, after the queen’s coronation, which was to take place on the first of February, to hold a convention of the lords for the purpose, as was thought, of a reform of the clerical order.¹

This account of the hopeful inclinations of James, combined with tidings of the coalition between Francis I. and the emperor, roused the attention of Henry: his nephew might be persuaded not only to keep aloof from this coalition, but to commence a reform in Scotland similar to that of England, by plundering the church and persecuting the clergy. He therefore sent Sir Ralph Sadler as his envoy to the Scottish court, ostensibly as the bearer of a present of six horses, but to whisper in the king’s ear at the first interview that weightier matters were to be discussed which needed a private conference. What these were are contained in his letter of instructions. He was first to communicate to him certain intercepted letters of Cardinal Beaton, in which it appeared that the cardinal aimed at nothing less than the establishment of a popedom in Scotland in his own person, by engrossing all power both civil and ecclesiastical. He was then to impart to him the King of England’s dislike that his nephew should increase his revenue by “gathering into his hands numbers of sheep and other vile and mean things,” at which the poor might “mutter and mutiny” to see their livings taken from them; and to advise James of a nobler and more effectual means of enriching himself, by the confiscation of monasteries and religious endowments; “with the same he might easily establish his estate in such wise as he should be able to live like a king and yet meddle not with sheep and those mean things, which be matter whereupon to occupy the meanest of the people.” “But if ever he will do anything this way,” the letter of instructions added, “he must keep it very close and secret; for if any of his clergy may smell it they will not fail, either by suggesting him to the wars,

¹ State Papers, vol. v. pp. 169, 171, 172.

or by procuring some other prince or potentate to make war upon him, or by provoking of inward rebellion and treason, or by one false and untrue mean or other, to keep him in business and extreme need, or else utterly to destroy him." The third and last subject upon which Sadler was instructed to treat, and against which James was to be warned, was the coalition between Francis and the emperor. The King of Scots was to be reminded (and the admonition was highly impolitic, and more likely to enrage than admonish) how his father suffered by making himself the tool of France against his own friend and ally, while the latter (Henry) was absent from his kingdom. He was therefore entreated to beware how he committed himself either to Francis or Charles, and to consider how little either of these potentates could stand him in good stead; while against this was to be arrayed the advantages that would accrue from a union between the compliant nephew and loving, bountiful uncle. He would have rest, peace, and safety all his days, and nothing that he could reasonably desire should be withheld from him. And above all, should Henry's young son Edward die, and should his highness "leave none other child of the queen that now is, or any other lawful wife which he might have hereafter"—and it was added that this was not improbable, considering Henry's years—then James, in consequence of Mary and Elizabeth being set aside in the succession if their father so willed it, might peradventure succeed to the throne of England in reward of his dutiful compliance. It was the old inducement, but now more shadowy, more remote and unattainable, than ever. While the tongue of the envoy was thus urging and alluring the King of Scots his eye and his memory were not to be idle. "In the declaration of which things," said his letter of instructions, "the said Ralph Sadler shall most diligently note and observe his countenance, gesture, and fashion, with the very words of his answers as near as he can, and the manner of the speaking of the same, that at his return he may the better express the same to the king's majesty, using in his declaration of those secret things a good attemperance, and pithily inculking the king's majesty's affection towards him, with the points of his advice which do touch his honour and profit, as before is declared."¹

Thus armed at every point, and equipped for all moods and changes, the brave soldier and skilful diplomatist entered Scotland. The

first interview to which he was admitted was in the chapel of Holyrood, where James was kneeling at mass; while the cardinal and prelates of highest rank, the nobles, priests, and gentlemen were kneeling in worship beside him, and filling the whole of the building. It is not improbable that the heretic ambassador was in this way to be reminded of the strength of the old faith in Scotland, and the steadfastness of the Scottish court in maintaining it. As soon as worship had ended business commenced; and after the usual hollow compliments had been interchanged, expressive of the love of Henry, and the confiding alacrity with which it was received by his nephew, Sadler obtained the private hearing by which Beaton was to be unmasked and overthrown. His account of the interview as detailed by himself is both comic and instructive. "Sir," quoth I, "this is the matter: it fortun'd late that a subject of yours being servant, as is reported to your cardinal here, was, by the rage and tempest of the sea, driven a-land in the north parts of England, very like to have been drowned." "Yea," quoth he, "that was Brunstoun; he is now newly come home." "Yes, sir," quoth I, "the king's majesty, my master, had advertised you of the matter afore this time; but he respited the same until the return of the man, because your grace should both be sure of the parties, and be advertised of the matter all at once. This Brunstoun," quoth I, "when he was thus on land, by chance left certain private letters and copies behind him." "No," quoth he, "the letters were taken from him by the king, mine uncle's, officers." "Indeed, sir," quoth I, "the letters were found by the king, my master's officers, and sent up to his majesty." "Well," quoth he, "it is no force" [matter]. The name of Brunstoun, which Sadler had only learned at Bamborough before crossing the Border, he had introduced gratuitously to give effect to his communication; but on finding that the man was alive and at the Scottish court, instead of in France or at the bottom of the sea, the diplomatist endeavoured to make a merit of his blunder by the statement that his master had deferred the communication until the bearer of the letter should be confronted in person with the charge. In like manner, when Sadler found that James was aware of the unhandsome way in which these letters had been obtained, he "would not wade too far in the defence thereof, but thought to pass it over" and proceed to the matter in hand. But in spite of all his eloquence and dexterity his communication had lost its charm. When he expatiated on the usurping spirit of the hierarchy, and the necessity of its coercion by the kingly powers, the answer of James was such

¹ *State Papers and Letters of Sir Ralph Sadler*, p. 1-13, vol. i. Edin. 4to, 1809.

as would have driven his uncle into a frenzy. "By my troth," he said, "there are two laws, the spiritual law and the temporal: the cure of the one pertaineth to the pope's holiness and the spirituality; the other to kings, princes, and the temporality; and for my part, I trust I shall do my duty to God in the discharge of such things as pertain to the temporal power within my office and rule within this realm. But as for the spiritual law, in good faith we take no regard thereof, but commit that to the pope's holiness, and other ordinary ministers of the kirk within our realm." When Sadler ventured to remind him that the duty of a king was to execute the laws of God within the realm; that God had put a sword into his hand for the purpose; and that if he failed in exercising it upon all transgressors alike, the clergy would fail in their duty, the people would perish for lack of doctrine and the due preaching of it, and for every act of remissness in punishing such defaulters a reckoning would be required of him at the last day; it was then that the spirit of James broke forth unrestrained and in all its original vigour. "Marry," he cried, "I trust God shall give me grace to do my duty to him; and whatsoever he be in Scotland that we may know doth not his duty, both in the execution of God's laws above all, and also in the ministration of indifferent justice to our lieges; by God! if we may know him, we shall not lett [hesitate] to punish him, be he spiritual or temporal, in such ways as appertains; and that (ye shall trow me) they know all full well." Then, coming to the individual case of the cardinal, the king stated that Beaton's letter to Rome was nothing more than an application for the appointment of *legatus a latere*, an office which would be of benefit to the nation, and in favour of which he had himself also written to the pope. Here Sadler produced the original letter and offered to read it, by which James might detect the false pretence as well as the whole purpose of the cardinal; but the king abruptly replied, "No, keep the letter still; we will take another time for it." "That he spake to me very softly," says the envoy, "which I think he did because the cardinal was present in the chamber."

Finding that a direct attack upon the cardinal and prelates was hopeless, Sadler now proceeded to the second part of his commission, in which the same object was to be attempted in a different form. It was by an attack upon the king's sheep. Sadler represented how sordid and unkingly such a source of royal revenue would be reckoned, in which he repeated verbatim the language of his private instructions. "Wherefore," said he, "the king's majesty, your

uncle, wisheth that you would rather apply yourself by good and politic means to increase your revenue by taking of some of those religious houses (such as may be best spared) into your hands, which do occupy and possess a great part of the possessions of your realm, to the maintenance of their voluptu and idle life and the continual decay of your estate; and the rest of them, which be most notable, to alter into colleges or cathedral churches and alms-houses, as the king's majesty, your uncle, hath done; whereby ye shall well perceive that one house so altered shall tend more to the glory of God than a number of them now doth; and yet shall ye establish your revenue thereby in such sort as ye shall be able to live like a king, and yet not meddle with sheep nor such mean things, being matter whereupon to occupy the meanest of your people and subjects." "In good faith," cried James, "I have no sheep, nor occupy no such things." He was ashamed of the fact, although it was notorious that he had ten thousand well-fed, profitable muttons grazing upon the crown-lands of Ettrick Forest, which were there kept as safely as if they had been within the bounds of Fife—a fact at once honourable to his prudent economy and the order he had restored in one of the most unsettled districts of his kingdom. "But for my own part," he added, "by my troth I never knew what I had of mine own, nor yet do." There was a good old man in France, his good father the king, whom he would so term because he had been like a father to him, who would not see him in want of anything. As for the putting down of abbeys and religious houses, he would not listen to it; "what need I," he asked, "to take them to increase my livelihood when I may have anything that I can require of them?" Sadler represented how useless these institutions had become, and how complete a nullity were their oaths of chastity, wilful poverty, and obedience; and he proceeded to illustrate this fact, dwelling chiefly upon the monastic violations of the vow of chastity, as had been manifested by the visitations among the religious houses in England, when James interrupted him with, "God forbid that if a few be not good, for them all the rest should be destroyed!" and expressed his determination to reform what was evil among them if his life was continued. Henry's example was not to his taste, and this part of the argument was speedily dismissed.

On the other affairs of Sadler's mission the answers of James were vague and indefinite; he was unwilling to commit himself and would promise nothing, or if he promised it was equivocally and with reservation. When the alliance of France, Germany, and Rome was

mentioned, and the report that these three powers were united for the purpose of invading England, James laughed at it as an idle rumour; and when the envoy proceeded to state that Scotland and its king were expected to take part in this enterprise the other hastened to disclaim any share in such a purpose. "I am no bairn," he indignantly exclaimed; "neither emperor nor French king can draw me to do what they list." Unsatisfied, apparently, with these protestations, Sadler proceeded to show how much more expedient and profitable it would be for James to be in close alliance with Henry rather than with Francis and Charles; and for this purpose he suggested, as he had been taught, the possibility of the Scottish king's accession to the throne of England; but James, who knew what this vague prospect was worth, took no notice of it, but merely repeated his protestations of good-will to Henry and his resolution to live at peace with England. And now was the time to propose the personal meeting between James and Henry—an affair which the latter had so greatly at heart, and in which he expected by his eloquence and intellectual superiority to mould James to his will and make him a religious reformer after his own pattern. But James dexterously eluded the proposal by inserting a clause that made such a meeting impossible. "By my troth," he said, "I would be glad to see the king, mine uncle, but I would wish that the French king might be at it, that we three might meet and join together in one." This could not be, as Sadler plainly showed; but when he proceeded to explain how easily a meeting between the Kings of Scotland and England might be effected, Francis being set aside, James politely deferred any promise upon the subject to an indefinite period. Thus ended this curious diplomatic fencing match, in which the king held his own with no small measure of prudence, cunning, and self-command, against one of the ablest statesmen of England. The reformation of the church by the seizure of its property and the proposed meeting between James and his uncle were again brought forward at a subsequent conference, but with no better success. James still eluded these unwelcome subjects, but with such courtesy as to give no ground of offence; and Sadler was soon given to know that his own stay in Scotland must be brief, as the king, who was an enthusiast in hawking "both to the heron and the river," was impatient to be gone into the country for the sport, and only waited the ambassador's departure, whom he had no purpose to carry in his train.¹

But other occupations than those of hawking were soon to occupy the cares of the Scottish king. He had reduced the Borders to some degree of temporary tranquillity by summary executions of their principal disturbers, and the isles and northern extremities of his kingdom were now in need of the same rigorous remedies. From their remote situation and the divisions of their inhabitants into hostile clans, as well as their exposure to the visits of pirates who were hostile to all alike, they were homes of insecurity, strife, and bloodshed, in which neither mercy was shown nor law regarded. It was time that they should participate in the benefits of a royal progress; and James, who had made preparations for the voyage, was enabled, in consequence of the birth of a son on the 22d of May, 1540, to embark without fear that through any mischance to himself his throne should be left without a successor. His fleet consisted in all of sixteen ships, of which three were victuallers and one a light exploring pinnace, while their complement of guns was so complete that it was reported scarcely ten pieces of ordnance had been left behind on shore. Of soldiers for the expedition the Earls of Huntly and Arran had brought with them a thousand and Cardinal Beaton five hundred men from Fife and Angus, while the royal train, the barons, gentlemen, and their servants composed a splendid array that was well matched by the painting, gilding, and gallant trim of the ships, so that it was said such a fleet had never been seen before in Scotland. While all was thus amply prepared both for pleasure and warlike enterprise, the scientific interests of such a voyage were not overlooked; and Alexander Lyndsay, a skilful pilot and hydrographer, accompanied the expedition to construct maps of the strange seas, whose dangers were fully to be explored and noted down for the use of future navigators. Such preparations had not been made without observation, and the letters of the English emissaries on the Borders which were sent to headquarters gave alarming surmises of the purposes of such an armament. Some thought that the voyage was for France, and others to Flanders, for the purpose of an interview with Francis or the emperor; some that it was for Ireland, from whose wild chiefs letters had previously been sent to James offering him the sovereignty of their island if he would free them from the English dominion.¹ Amidst these conflicting surmises the queen's happy delivery was the signal for the fleet to weigh anchor, and it dropped down the Frith of Forth

¹ *State Papers and Letters of Sir Ralph Sadler*, vol. i. pp. 17-46.

¹ *State Papers*, vol. v.; Letter of Layton to the Earl of Essex, p. 178; of Thomas Eure to Wharton, p. 179.

amidst the gaze of admiring thousands who lined the shores on either side. After passing along the coast of Fife and the shores of Angus, Mearns, and Buchan, the ships commenced their voyage of danger and exploration by doubling the promontory of Kinnaird, visiting the wild shores of Caithness, and arriving at the Orkneys, where they found all so peaceful that little remained to be done except to note down the geographical peculiarities of these wild headlands and perilous seas, with their manifold inlets and voes. The fleet then doubled Cape Wrath, visited the islands of Lewis, Harris, and North and South Uist, and crossing over to Skye, touched at Glenelg, Moidart, and Ardnamurchan. Mull, Coll, Tiree were visited in turn, with the shores of Argyle and the islands of Jura, Colonsay, and Isla; and in returning by the estuary of the Clyde a short stay was made at the romantic Arran and at Bute, the ancient patrimony and home of the Stewarts. Wherever this fleet had appeared the people had been awed by the conviction that they were not inaccessible to the power of the laws and the personal presence of their administrators; and of this James had given them a severe but wholesome proof by carrying off the most turbulent of their chiefs, who were to be kept in durance in Edinburgh as pledges for the conduct of their vassals and relatives. Of these the names of eight who are given were men of high island lineage whose will was the only law of their followers, but who were now compelled to feel that they had a superior. While these vigorous measures were adopted for the establishment of peace and order among such wild communities, opportunities of amusement were not neglected; and the king and nobles followed their favourite exercise of hunting in those districts which were best fitted for its indulgence. On arriving at Dumbarton James sent several of the vessels with the island hostages round to Leith by sea, and travelled himself by land to Edinburgh.

One of the first events which occurred after the return of the king was the execution of Sir James Hamilton, the well-known Bastard of Arran. This ferocious baron, who seems to have possessed no redeeming quality but that of fearless and adventurous courage, had been at one time, as we have seen, a royal favourite, but had afterwards fallen into the king's displeasure. He was too powerful, however, to be wholly thrown aside, while his unscrupulous character and devotedness to the church had recommended him as a fit instrument to the clergy in the wholesale persecution which they contemplated against the reformers. They feared that the king might be tempted by his poverty

to follow the example of his uncle and enrich himself at the expense of the church, and to avoid such a calamity they had represented the greater facility with which his wants might be supplied from the confiscated estates of the heretics. These only needed to be tried and punished according to law, while none was better fitted to preside over such a court and enforce its sentences than the zealous, dauntless Sir James. Their representation was effectual, and Hamilton was appointed chief judge for a court in which the clergy could not themselves act in cases of capital punishment. But this office, intrusted to such dangerous hands, was of very brief tenure. James Hamilton of Kincavil, sheriff of Linlithgow and brother of Patrick Hamilton, the protomartyr, in whose death the Bastard had taken an active part, sent a private message to the king as he was about to cross to Fife, and in consequence of this communication the new judge found himself suddenly arrested upon the charge of high treason. Being thus made fast, the Bastard had too many enemies and was too much dreaded to be permitted easily to escape, and the charge brought against him was that along with the Douglasses he had conspired the king's death. This was in 1528, when men were traitors or royalists according to the fortune of the hour, and the manifold apostasies of this period had been afterwards quietly overlooked. But it is alleged that more recent iniquities were added to the original charge: these were that on one occasion he broke into the royal bed-chamber with an intention to murder the king, and that he kept up a secret correspondence with the banished Douglasses. Confident in the king's renewed favour, and in the services he had rendered his royal master by a costly repair of the palaces of Stirling and Linlithgow, the Bastard anticipated his acquittal; but he was condemned as guilty and hurried off to instant execution. At his trial and on the scaffold he denied to the last the crimes that were laid to his charge, and declared—as Wolsey and others also had done before him—that if he had but been as devoted to the service of God as to that of the king he would not now have died an ignominious death. So manifold had been his deeds of treachery and cruelty, especially in the murder of the Earl of Lennox, that few regretted his execution except the clergy, whose merciless designs were frustrated by his death.¹

After this event James became the victim of gloomy and suspicious fears. Alarmed at the example several of the nobles retired from court,

¹ Buchanan, xiv. 56, 57; Lesley, p. 158; *Acts of the Parliaments of Scotland*, ii. p. 423; Pitscottie, pp. 164-167.

fearing that on some sudden charge Hamilton's fate might be their own, while those who remained were eyed by the king with distrust, as persons who might finish what Hamilton had left undone. Melancholy himself he could endure no sight or sound of cheerfulness in others, and he became a weariness to his very servants, who could no longer indulge in their wonted sports and recreations. But still more miserable were his hours of sleep, when fancy ruled unchecked, and embodied the half-subdued fears of the day into stern life-like realities. In one of these dreams Sir James Hamilton seemed to rush upon him with a drawn sword, and after upbraiding him as the cause of his death, appeared to lop off first his right arm and then his left, with the threat that he would soon return and strike off his head. The king started in his slumbers and called his servants to the rescue; and when they found him horror-stricken and almost breathless he told them his vision, while they trembled at the unknown danger that was portended. The coming of daylight brought the interpretation, for a messenger arrived to tell him that his elder son was sick and dying at Saint Andrews; but although he hastened thither the child was dead before he arrived; and soon after he was called to Stirling, with the news that his second son, Arthur, only eight days old, was also sick. The latter died within a few hours after his brother's decease, and thus in one day the king was childless, and the land without an heir; half of the dream was accomplished, but the worst remained to be fulfilled.¹

Such, however, were the growing and multiplying cares of James's government that they were sufficient to banish these spectral terrors; and one of his first attempts was to improve the crown revenues, which had been so greatly dilapidated during his minority. In 1537, while he was in France, he had issued at Rouen a decree, by which he revoked all grants prejudicial to the crown that had been passed before he reached maturity; but on the 3d of December (1540) he not only confirmed this revocation in a parliament assembled at Edinburgh, but published a new act, by which a greater annexation was made to the royal domains than any of his predecessors had contemplated. It commenced with the islands comprised under the name of the Hebrides, which could be only appropriated by royal authority upon the plea that the inhabitants of these islands were still lawless and disaffected. This bold measure he was the more effectually able to accomplish, because he had carried off from them in his late voyage their principal chieftains as

hostages. Next succeeded the Orkney and Shetland Islands, which had lately been disturbed in their allegiance by the invasion of the Earl of Caithness. On the mainland he claimed for the crown the lordships of Douglas, Crawford-John, Crawford-Lyndsay, Preston, Bonkill, Tantallon, Bothwell, Jedburgh Forest, and the superiority of the county or earldom of Angus. Even this might have seemed more than enough, but to these were added Glamis and its dependencies, Liddesdale belonging to the Earl of Bothwell, who was attached to the Douglasses, and Evandale, the property of Sir James Hamilton. Well might the nobles tremble or be indignant when they found such extensive possessions accessible to the royal grasp—and more especially when they were to be retained for the crown instead of being parted among themselves as the price of their continuing allegiance. It could scarcely make these appropriations more palatable, that a general act of amnesty was proclaimed at the close of the session for all bypast treasons and offences, more especially when exceptions were made against the correspondents and adherents of the Earl of Angus, his brother Sir George, and their uncle Archibald, a category comprising nearly all the traitors in Scotland.

After this vindication of the rights of royalty those of the church were guarded in the same usurping fashion. It was decreed that no man should question or impugn the pope's authority under pain of death. For the confounding of heresy all the sacraments were to be held and honoured as they had been in times past. The Virgin Mary was to be worshipped, honoured, and addressed with prayer throughout the whole realm. No conventicles or meetings were to be held in private houses to commune or debate upon the Scriptures, unless the members were theologians approved of by the universities, or sanctioned by their authority. No person was to lodge, receive, favour, or cherish any heretic. No person who had been suspected of heresy, however he might have been received to penance and absolution, was to hold any office whether spiritual or temporal within burgh or without, or in the king's council. Persons cited to trial for heresy and failing to appear were to be condemned and banished; all who interceded for them, or in any way assisted them, were to be punished as abettors of heretics; while the fugitives themselves were neither to be admitted to purgation nor allowed to remain within the kingdom. And to secure more effectually the apprehension and conviction of heretics, all who denounced them were to share in the confiscation of their goods,—an inducement that was to be publicly proclaimed by all sheriffs,

¹ Buchanan, xiv. p. 58; Pitscottie, pp. 167, 168; Drummond (of Hawthornden), *History of Scotland*, p. 337.

provosts, and bailies of burghs at the chief places of their jurisdiction twice a year. Another statute shows the progress which the reformation had already made, and the course which it was to adopt in Scotland; for it was against those who broke down or defaced, or otherwise irreverently treated the images of the saints. These iconoclastic symptoms showed that the coming change was to be no half measure or compromise. As such enactments might have been complained of as severe and one-sided, and not sufficient to meet the general evil, the arrest of clerical corruption was attempted as well as the extinction of heresy. It was confessed and stated, that "the negligence of divine service; the great dishonesty in the kirk through not making of reparation to the honour of God Almighty, and to the blessed sacrament of the altar, the Virgin Mary, and all holy saints; and also the dishonesty and misrule of kirkmen both in wit, knowledge, and manners, is the matter and cause that the kirk and kirkmen are lightlied and condemned"—and then came the remedy. But did it bear any proportion to that measure of woe and punishment denounced upon the heretics, whose delinquencies these clerical offences had so largely cherished and encouraged? Instead of this the statement of the remedy was more gentle than that of the evil. The king's grace only *exhorts* and *prays* "all archbishops, ordinaries, and other prelates, and every kirkman in his own degree" to reform themselves and those in office under them in their public duties and private conduct, hinting that otherwise he shall find remedy against the defaulters at the hands of his holiness the pope. In all the statutes of this parliament in reference to the church it is easy to recognize the partial and persecuting hand of Cardinal Beaton.

The suppression of the nobility, but still more the establishment of the authority of the old church and persecution of Lutheranism, were certain to create a war with England, if not a civil war also. These enactments could not be enforced except with a weighty hand, for not only were Protestantism and feudalism to be controlled alike, but the defiance thus hurled against Henry to be made good. The difficulties of James were hourly becoming more complicated, and he was impatient to grasp the sword that would cut their knots asunder. The same must have been the feeling of the churchmen whose all was at stake, and who could see no remedy but war and persecution. The war-laws were therefore repeated with greater urgency and with fuller amplitude than ever. And first of weapon-shaws, which for some time had fallen into disuse, they were again ordered to be held twice a year regularly, and thrice

during the first year in consequence of the previous omissions. That there might also be no fraud in such obligatory musters for the national defence, every earl, baron, and laird coming to the meeting was to give the number of his followers and their weapons in writing, and sealed with his seal, to the presiding magistrate, the scroll itself to be transmitted to the king. To secure the efficiency of these soldiers it was decreed that experienced captains should be appointed in every parish to drill them two days a month in May, June, and July, and on the other months also if it should be found necessary. When the whole feudal array was mustered for actual service all the men of war, except earls, lords, barons, and great landed proprietors, were to attend on foot, and no horses were to be used in the war except for carriages and baggage wagons. The leaders thus privileged, and all having land of a hundred pounds' yearly rental, were to be armed in white harness, light or heavy according to their pleasure, while all other persons below that rental were to have a jack of plate, a hauberk or brigantine with pesane and gorget, and splents of mail, with gloves of plate or mail; and gentlemen without land, and yeomen were to be armed in jacks of plate, hauberk splents, pesane or gorget, sellat or steel bonnet, and every man a sword. No manner of weapons were to be admitted at the weapon-shawings but spears, pikes six ells long, Leith axes, halberts, hand-bows and arrows, cross-bows, culverins, and two-handed swords. All were to be thus accoutred according to their degree under heavy fines, while the previous neglect of such musters was shown by the permission for all men at the first weapon-shaw to come armed in such weapons as they could conveniently get until the full equipment had been prepared.

But in spite of long spears, heavy swords, and well-tempered corselets, something more important still was needed to contend with an enemy on equal terms; and for this a provision was made in the present parliament. "Because," says the statute, "the shot of guns, hagbuts, hand-bows, and other small artillery now commonly used in all countries both by sea and land in their wars, is so fell and uneschewable to the pith of high courage of noble and valiant men, whose acts and deeds cannot be shown without contrary provision of war and battle,"—and then proceeded the decree for the remedy. It was, that every landed man should have a "hagbut of found," with its due complement of bullets and pellets of lead and iron, and also of gunpowder for every hundred pounds' worth of land he had; while he who had but a hundred marks of land was to have two cul-

verins, and the possessor of a forty-pound land was to have one culverin—with every other appurtenance of use for the clumsy artillery of the period. Each was also to have one or more men according to his furnishing to be in readiness for serving these hagbuts and culverins and instructing others in their use. All this store of new weapons and practice of gunnery was to be in readiness for service at the end of eighteen months; and whosoever was found unprovided at that period was to forfeit double the price of the piece of artillery in which he was found wanting. In like manner every churchman was to furnish his quota in hagbut or culverin according to the rate of his temporal landed possessions. As it was found impossible that these weapons could be in readiness at the time appointed unless a large part of them was imported from abroad, it was also ordained that every merchant embarking his goods to a foreign port should import two hagbuts for every last of goods, or at least as much metal as would make them, and a certain proportion of gunpowder for their use.¹

These were alarming symptoms of approaching warfare; but they were followed by indications of a still more decisive character. For while James was assuring Lancaster herald, then at Edinburgh, of his pacific intentions towards England, he was issuing a proclamation ordering all men between sixteen and sixty to hold themselves in readiness to muster with their warlike equipments upon a summons of twenty hours. Sixteen great and sixty smaller cannons were also preparing in the castle of Edinburgh. These were tokens of a hostile movement which might at any moment commence, and of which England was likely to be the object. They could scarcely occur, however, without a correspondent movement on the part of Henry, and therefore, in the beginning of 1541, he appointed the Duke of Norfolk as his lieutenant of the Borders for their defence against Scotland, and despatched letters to the Border gentlemen prescribing the military preparations with which they were to second the duke's endeavours. They were to be in readiness with all their servants and retainers within an hour's notice. They were to muster as many horsemen as they could, armed with lances. Of the infantry a fourth part were to be good archers, and the rest to be billmen, each man besides his sword and dagger having a good bill suspended from his neck. These precautions seemed to intimate the apprehension of a second Flodden; but James, although he

was under the dominion of his clerical advisers, whose greatest protection against English heresy was a war with England, was still unwilling to undertake so decisive a step. His whole conduct, indeed, at this period was so wavering and unsettled, that it was uncertain whether he would ultimately be the champion or the plunderer of the church, the imitator or antagonist of Henry. Such were the tidings transmitted by the Duke of Norfolk to the lord privy seal of England, who added, that if James did not go to war by the counsel of his priests during the summer he would seize their possessions before Christmas. From the same source we learn that James still continued the enemy of England; that his young queen was devoted to the cause of Rome, and that Margaret, the queen-mother, was of the same inclination.² In such a state of indecision had James but possessed better advisers than his priests, or a more temperate enemy than his uncle, his career might even yet have been reversed, and his doom averted.

One of these specimens of the royal indecision is too characteristic as well as too important to be omitted. The clergy, who knew the poverty of James and his love of money, and who dreaded the effects of this temptation, seconded as it was by the remedy his uncle had suggested, tried to divert his attention from the wealth of the church to the property of the reformers, and showed how easily this would become his own by a strict administration of the laws against heresy and its adherents. They had also drawn up a list of the barons and landed gentlemen who were supposed to favour the reformation, whose lives and fortunes had therefore been forfeited, and this they presented to the king after he returned from his voyage among the islands. It was probably about the present period that James received the death-scroll, which contained the names of some of his best servants, and among others, that of the laird of Grange, his treasurer, to whom he showed it, and whose counsel he asked on the occasion; but Grange so effectually demonstrated the folly and danger of such a wholesale proscription, that James appears to have been ashamed that he had for a moment entertained it. He accordingly reserved the full burst of his rage for its proposers, who were not slow to return to the palace of Holyrood, with the cardinal at their head, to learn the effect of their suggestions. Scarcely had they opened up the subject and begun to state how profitable it would be to the crown than his pent-up rage exploded: "Pack off you jail-birds!" he cried—"get you to your charges and reform your own lives, and be not instruments of discord betwixt

¹ *Acts of the Parliaments of Scotland*, vol. ii. in an. 1540, Jacob. V.

² *State Papers*, vol. v. p. 184; *Caligula*, b. vii. 228.

my nobility and me; or else I vow to God, I shall reform you, not as the King of Denmark doth by imprisonment, neither yet as the King of England doth by hanging and heading, but by sharper punishments, if ever I hear such a motion made by you again!"¹ This was sharp enough; but it is added in another account that he also threatened to stick them with his whinger,—that he unsheathed his weapon as if to fulfil the threat,—and that the priests, terrified at this unexpected rebuff, fled in terror from his presence.²

It was about this period that Margaret, whose life had been so eventful, ended her troubled career. She had become a nullity with all parties, and she died unregretted. Her last matrimonial attempt was to rid herself of her third husband, Lord Methven, by a divorce, and in 1537 she had procured a sentence to that effect; but her son, ashamed of the scandal, prevented it from being published, and compelled her to live with her husband, at whose castle of Methven she expired at the age of fifty-two. Feeling her last moment drawing nigh, she sent for her son, who was then at Falkland; but he did not arrive in time to witness her departure, and before she died we are told she bitterly lamented to the friars who attended her the unkindness of her conduct to the Earl of Angus, and charged them to entreat her son upon their knees to be good and gracious to that exiled nobleman. James honoured his mother by bestowing upon her a royal funeral in the church of the Carthusians at Perth, and in the tomb of James I., himself and several of his principal nobles being mourners at the solemnity.³

Notwithstanding the death of his children and the dangerous because concealed hatred of his nobles the king renewed his wonted vigour of mind and resumed his plans for the welfare of his subjects. For the defence of the kingdom he purchased abundance of artillery and military stores from France and Flanders. Desirous to improve the stunted breed of Scottish horses he imported steeds of great bone and strength from Sweden and Denmark. He invited the possessors of liberal arts and the ingenious in mechanical operations with workmen of every description from all the continental countries, and encouraged them to settle in Scotland and instruct the people, by bountiful wages, and sometimes also by regular pensions. The Scottish fisheries, that still neglected mine of national wealth, also occupied the royal cares. James, in his voyage of the preceding year, had learned of the en-

croachments made by fishing vessels from Holland, Flanders, and Bremen, in the seas of Orkney and Shetland, and the acts of violence with which they took possession of these as if they had been their own lawful fishing-grounds; and to prevent such intrusions in future he sent Sir John Campbell of Lundy as his ambassador to the Netherlands, from the court of which was obtained a promise of redress. Nor were the interests of learning neglected by one who was himself an accomplished poet as well as king; and in one of his progresses at this period with Mary of Guise, he stayed fifteen days at Aberdeen listening to the exercises and disputations on all kinds of sciences in the colleges and schools, and to the orations that were delivered in Greek, Latin, and other languages. About the same time Cardinal Beaton and David Panter, the king's secretary, went on a journey through France and Rome. As such an event, when religion was the politics of the day and Rome its headquarters, could not occur without question and comment, the cardinal's ostensible object was to obtain the office of papal legate for Scotland. This would not only augment his political power and make him the Wolsey of his country, but arm him more fully for the defence of his falling church and the punishment of its assailants. But a deeper and more important design, it has been thought, was at the bottom of the mission. Francis, the emperor, and the pope were still combined for the suppression of heresy by war and violent extirpation, and it was suspected that James was now about to join, if he had not already joined, the crusade by which one half of Europe would have been armed against the other, and every kingdom divided against itself. It was a project suited to the towering ambition and great talents of Beaton, and it is certain that he would leave no means untried to engage his master in the confederacy.

It was probably during the absence of Beaton that Henry once more sent Sir Ralph Sadler on an embassy to Scotland. The time was opportune for a negotiation on those affairs which Henry had most at heart, as the cardinal's place in the council was no longer occupied. As before, the chief object of Sadler's mission was to propose an interview between James and his uncle, to which the King of Scotland on this occasion seems to have given a lingering assent. The appointed place of meeting was the city of York, and thither Henry repaired full of expectation; but James had not arrived, and although he waited at least six days in expectation the Scottish king did not make his appearance. It is probable that the clerical advisers of James had interposed on this occasion, and nothing

¹ Calderwood's *History of the Kirk of Scotland* (Wodrow Publications), vol. i. pp. 146, 147.

² Sir James Melvil's *Memoirs*, p. 4, folio, Lond. 1683.

³ State Papers, v. pp. 194, 195; Lesley, p. 157.

could have been more favourable to their wish for a war with England than this mode of wounding the pride of Henry, who returned indignant to London; and although James afterwards sent an ambassador to apologize for the failure, the excuse came too late. A year of nothing more than warlike preparation followed, either from a lingering reluctance to strike, or to make the blow more decisive, but the interval was filled with such irritating circumstances as made a rupture inevitable. Henry had resolved to assert the claim of his predecessors to the superiority of Scotland, and with this view he sent orders to the Archbishop of York to explore the old records within his diocese for such historical testimonies as would fortify the claim, and thus provided, he no doubt hoped to conquer the rebellious kingdom and make the whole island Protestant, with himself for its supreme pontiff. On the other hand, he was annoyed by the Irish insurgents, who had become more ungovernable than ever through the hope of Scottish countenance and aid. Hitherto the kings of England had been contented with the title of Lords of Ireland, but Henry had now assumed the title of king of that island, a title that made the yoke of conquest more galling. In Ireland many of the chiefs were allied with Scotland, and whole districts were occupied by a Scottish population; and as these considered themselves no subjects or serfs of Henry, they were indignant at his assumption, and applied for redress to James, whom they considered their liege lord. They therefore offered him their homage and the crown of their part of the island, a royalty by no means tempting, and which he showed no wish to accept; but an equal offence in the eyes of Henry was their addressing him as "defender of the faith," a title which the pope had first bestowed upon Henry himself, but afterwards had transferred to James when the other had commenced his open warfare against Rome.

All being thus ripened for action, hostilities commenced in 1542. By whom they were begun has been a matter of question, but the foregoing circumstances as well as his quarrelsome spirit and greater means of annoyance make it probable that Henry was the aggressor. His mode of commencement also, as detailed by one of our old historians,¹ was in full consistency with his character, when it is alleged that without any formal proclamation of war he sent the Duke of Norfolk with a large army to invade Scotland by land, while he commissioned his fleet to act against the Scots by sea. On this account twenty-eight Scottish merchant-ships trading to

France, Flanders, and Denmark, and unprepared for hostilities, were captured and brought into English ports; and when James remonstrated and demanded their restitution he was refused. At the same time Sir Robert Bowes, captain of the castle of Norham, and warden of the east marches, at the head of three thousand horse, and accompanied by the Earl of Angus and his brother, Sir George Douglas, crossed the Border and made an irruption into Teviotdale. They proceeded with the usual work of burning, plundering, and cattle driving, and were about to set fire to the town of Jedburgh when they were confronted by a small force under the Earl of Huntly, whom the king had despatched against the invaders. Despising the scanty number of the Gordons, the English attacked them at Hadden-Rig, but Huntly, who was suddenly joined by Lord Home at the head of four hundred mounted Borderers, obtained a complete victory. Not many were killed, but a considerable number taken prisoners, among whom were Sir Robert Bowes himself and his brother Sir Richard. The Earl of Angus was also nearly taken, in which case he would have expiated his treason upon the scaffold, but he despatched his assailant with his dagger, and escaped from the field.² This victory, which after all was but a skirmish, wonderfully revived the courage of the supporters of the old religion, so that Sir Andrew Ker of Littlestone, who brought the tidings, was rewarded with the estate of Hirsill. But the confidence of the Scottish bishops and priests was excessive, so that their usual cry was, "All is ours! they be but heretics! If we be one thousand and they ten thousand they dare not fight. France shall enter upon the one side and we on the other, so shall England be conquered within a year."³

After this battle of Hadden-Rig war to the death was certain between the two kingdoms, for it was a religious conflict instead of a mere political affray; and the Duke of Norfolk, as lieutenant-general of the English borders, was ordered to muster forty thousand men and commence a decisive invasion of Scotland. Accompanied by the Earls of Shrewsbury, Derby, Cumberland, Surrey, Hertford, and Rutland, the renegade Earl of Angus, and the lords of the northern parts of England, the duke advanced by rapid marches towards York, upon which James, having raised an army of thirty-six thousand men, encamped upon Fala Muir, while he sent forward ten thousand under the Earl of Huntly to harass the English with skir-

¹ Lesley.

² Lesley, p. 162; Buchanan, xiv. 58.

³ Calderwood's *History of the Kirk of Scotland* (Wodrow Society's Publications), vol. i. p. 144.

mishes in their advance. Willing also either to avert the war or gain time, he attempted to renew negotiations with Norfolk, but the latter was under peremptory orders from his sovereign, so that he advanced to the Tweed and crossed it, but without venturing more than a mile beyond its banks. Here, however, he did his utmost by throwing out parties in every direction, and burning the villages and farmhouses within his reach; but in spite of this havoc he soon found himself so straitened for want of provisions that he could no longer maintain his ground, while an advance was both dangerous and uncertain. In this state, which promised him every advantage, James would gladly have given battle to the invaders, but to this reasonable desire his nobles were opposed. Being in the field, and therefore upon their own vantage-ground, with banners displayed and armed vassals mustered around them, they could now safely beard the sovereign who had sought to abridge their power; and when he intimated his wish they refused to advance, upon the plea that the invaders had as yet done little damage to Scotland, and therefore might be left undisturbed. It was a strange and unwonted fit of forbearance that might well make their king tremble. But these proud and fearless nobles would even endure the presence of an enemy on their native soil rather than forego their advantage; and because James had deserted them in favour of the priesthood, they were now resolved that he should learn the value of their concurrence and support, and find himself too late to profit by the lesson. They were the sons of those who had devotedly followed James IV. to defeat and death—the grandchildren of those who had conspired against James III. at Lauder; and they now showed that they were the offspring of their fathers for evil as well as for good. It was now the end of November, and the English having exhausted their supplies of provisions were obliged to recross the Border. This was a tempting opportunity for an inroad into England; the way lay open to them, and the strong inducements of glory, booty, and revenge invited them to enter and take possession. But still they refused to move, and to their refusal they added the provocation of the plea that their feudal service was only for defensive warfare, and not aggressive or beyond the national boundaries. Many of these recusants had no doubt followed the banner of the Duke of Albany, and had learned to thwart their sovereign by their practice upon the regent. Finding that remonstrance was in vain, James disbanded his army and returned to Edinburgh.

Indignant at this insult of the nobles, and hopeless of recalling them by argument or con-

ciliation even should he condescend to treat with them, the king felt himself compelled to throw himself wholly upon the priesthood. It was by their aid alone that he could hope to extricate himself from the difficulty into which they had so much contributed to involve him. The prelates received his advances gladly, and in return they tendered that scroll of proscription which they had formerly offered in vain, but which the king now received with an assenting smile and put into his pocket, where it remained to the hour of his death. He regretted also that he had so long delayed to act upon their advice; “for now,” said he, “I plainly see your words to be true; the nobility neither desire my honour nor countenance, for they would not ride a mile for my pleasure to follow my enemies. Will ye, therefore, find the means how I may have an inroad into England without their knowledge and consent, so that it may be known to be my own inroad? so shall I bind me to your counsel for ever.” The priests, with Cardinal Beaton at their head, joyfully assented, and letters were sent in every direction for a full muster to be made of the church’s vassals and all over whom the clergy had influence, while Lord Maxwell offered to commence the expedition with ten thousand men who should enter England by the western marches. The king then went to Lochmaben, the place of rendezvous, into which the troops had come pouring in from all quarters, but none knowing the purpose on hand; and at midnight, when the trumpets sounded to march, they advanced to the Esk and entered upon English ground, to the astonishment of their enemies, who could not conceive how such a sudden arrival had occurred, their wardens having got no tidings of the movement. So far it was a successful surprise; and a sudden dash of such an army, if properly conducted, might have wrought fearful havoc upon the western counties and retrieved the national honour, which for the present was somewhat soiled; but the king, instead of being at their head as they at first imagined, had remained at Lochmaben; and the English were already mustering, although in small numbers, to hinder their advance by skirmishing. “Who is our captain?” was now the universal cry both of groom and noble, and the question was met by a most unwelcome and unexpected answer; for mounted upon a temporary platform of crossed pikes, a certain Oliver Sinclair read, with sound of trumpet, a royal proclamation appointing him general of the army, and commanding all to give him obedience as to the king himself. A universal roar of indignation followed. Who was this Oliver Sinclair? He was simply the brother of Lord Roslin and laird of

Pitcairns, but distinguished for nothing more than that he was the king's especial favourite. It was in this way that even at such a critical moment James could show his hatred of the nobles by placing a private gentleman over them as their commander. In an instant the whole army was an agitated mob in which all obedience was lost and order confounded. While they were in this state a troop of three or four hundred English horsemen, under the command of Thomas Dacre and John Musgrave, who had been hovering in the distance, ventured to approach nearer; and observing the confusion of the Scottish troops, they came down upon them with levelled lances and at full gallop. And that army of ten thousand brave men did not abide more than the first shock; without looking at the number of the assailants they fled pell-mell, horse, foot, and baggage, some to the sea, some to a neighbouring morass, and surrendered in heaps by whomsoever they might be summoned. Not a few were taken prisoners by the Border thieves of their own country and sold to the English; some ran to the neighbouring houses and surrendered themselves to women; and happy was he who could find a captor. They could no longer seek the shelter of the country they had betrayed, and they were impatient for an English prison in which to hide their shame. As for Oliver Sinclair scarcely the commander of a moment, he was taken without resistance, while Lord Maxwell, who was so strangely supplanted in the leadership, refused to mount his horse and escape, saying to his friends, "Nay, I will rather abide here the chance it shall please God to send me than go home and there be hanged!" The same dread prevailed with the other nobles, so that the Earls of Cassilis and Glencairn, the Lords Fleming, Somerville, Oliphant, and Grey, and several gentlemen of lordly lineage were willing prisoners, because they dared not return home or face the anger of their sovereign. Panics among Scottish armies there had formerly been; but this was the crowning shame of such sudden and strange epidemics, because not a blow had been struck or loss of life sustained. It was no wonder if the early historians of the Reformation recognized it as a miraculous interposition as well as a positive judgment from heaven, through which their cause was so strangely to be advanced and its enemies overthrown.

While this miserable event was occurring at Solway, James was waiting for tidings at Lochmaben. These were not slow in reaching him, and they struck him with a mortal blow. All night long he murmured as in a trance, "Oh, oh! fled Oliver?—is Oliver taken?—did Oliver flee?" Dreading his nobles and not knowing

whom to trust, overwhelmed with the shame of such a defeat, and seeing no chance of escape but by concession and humiliation, he now thought of recalling the Earl of Angus, let the terms be what they might, as his only defence against the rebellious nobility; and this unwelcome alternative he vented in the threat, "I shall bring him home that shall take order with them all!" On the morning he returned to Edinburgh, to which also the cardinal repaired from Haddington to meet him; but when they met there was such mutual shame and confusion that little or no speech passed between them. Still unable to look his subjects in the face, and impatient for solitude, the king passed over privately to Fife; but wherever he went he felt, from the fever of anguish which had taken hold of him, that his hours were numbered. When the lady of Kirkcaldy of Grange, his treasurer, exhorted him to take comfort and be of good hope, he replied, "My portion of this world is short, for I will not be with you fifteen days!" and when his servants asked him where they should provide for his holding of the ensuing Christmas which was approaching, he replied almost contemptuously, "I cannot tell—choose you the place; but this I can tell you, before Christmas day you shall be without a master and the realm without a king!" He went to his royal residence at Falkland and there lay down to die, still continuing to mutter unconsciously the words, "Fy! fled is Oliver? Is Oliver taken? All is lost." A messenger arrived to announce that the queen had been delivered of an infant; and the dying man, roused by the tidings, asked if it was a boy or girl, hoping that if the former, a male heir to the crown was obtained and that all was not lost as yet; but when told that it was a girl he answered with a burst of impatience, "The devil go with it! it will end as it begun: it came with a woman and it will end with a woman!" The direct line of Stewart, like that of Bruce, was now to pass away; and with this conviction he turned his face to the wall, rejecting all further question or parley. The cardinal, the Earls of Argyle and Rothes, the Lords Erskine and Lindsay, the laird of Grange, Sir David Lyndsay of the Mount, and a few others were in attendance at his last moments; and while they wept around his bed he kissed his hand, gave it to each of them in turn, smiled upon them an affectionate farewell, and so expired. Never was the vague phrase, "Died of a broken heart," so often used as a figurative expression, illustrated more literally or more mournfully than when the strong-bodied, brave-hearted, high-spirited James V. died at Falkland on the 13th of December (1542), without

any specific disease, and only in the thirty-first year of his age.¹

As already stated Cardinal Beaton was one of those who attended James at Falkland, and to him the unexpected demise was of the utmost importance. His schemes for the advancement of the church and his own aggrandizement were thus suddenly arrested; and should the adherents of the Reformation, already so numerous and influential, obtain a share in the government during the long minority that was to follow, all his plans might be scattered to the winds and himself called to a very severe account. This was sufficient to disprove the ridiculous assertion that he had caused the king's death by means of an "Italian posset," or in other words, by a dose of subtle poison—a calumny raised by his enemies and propagated by those who were afterwards leagued for his death. His greatest iniquity upon this sad occasion was confined to a political juggle by which he sought to make the most of the event. While the king lay insensible he exclaimed in his ear, "Take order, sir, with your realm. Who shall rule during the minority of your daughter? You have known my services: what will you have done? Shall there not be four regents chosen, and shall not I be the principal?" To these leading questions it is uncertain whether an answer was returned, even if the dying man was able to understand them; but in such a case any sign, or no sign whatever, might be interpreted into an assent. It was also added that the dead man's hand was used for the royal subscription to a blank roll of paper or parchment, to be afterwards filled up at the cardinal's pleasure and brought forward as the last will and testament of the king.²

In personal appearance and endowments few of our Scottish sovereigns could be compared to James V. Of but ordinary stature, he was superior to most men in strength, activity, and endurance; while his air and countenance were so noble that Ariosto, who only learned of him from report, embodied him in his great poem under the character of "Zerbino"—that Scottish prince whom nature cast in the fairest type of humanity, and then destroyed the mould.

Those toils which would have exhausted others were to him a recreation and a pleasure which danger only enhanced and perfected, so that he was often night and day together on horseback in pursuit of criminals whom justice could not otherwise reach; and he would come down upon them when least expected, and with a courage which they could not resist. On this account strong evil-doers trembled at his name, and never could be certain that they were beyond his reach. With all this hardihood and love of excitement James was abstemious in diet and seldom used wine. In manners he was frank, open, and winning, and the lowliest had ready access to his presence, so that his willingness to redress their grievances justly obtained for him the title of "King of the Poor." He was so well acquainted with the customs and institutions of the different districts throughout his variously-peopled kingdom that even in the haste of a journey he would give just and wise judgments upon the cases that were brought before him; and although he sometimes inclined to severity, it does not seem to have been more than the state of society required. But here, unfortunately, his good qualities might be said to terminate. While his understanding, naturally acute, had been little cultivated, his evil passions had been fostered by his early guardians for their own selfish purposes, so that in licentiousness he exceeded all his predecessors, sparing neither maid nor matron in his sensual pursuits. Owing, also, to the poverty in which his boyhood had been reared by a thriftless mother and dishonest servants, and the scantiness of his revenues when he arrived at mature age as compared with the great schemes which he sought to accomplish, he had learned to estimate the value of money too closely, and was often chargeable with the unkingly faults of avarice and parsimoniousness. Had he been born at an earlier or a later date—had he been blessed with better nurture, surrounded by more honest counsellors, or identified with a rising instead of a falling church—in all or in any of these cases his faults would not have been so flagrant nor his end so disastrous. As it was we see in the instance of James V. the elements of a noble, kingly character perverted, and the interests of a whole nation sacrificed by an ambitious nobility and a selfish, corrupt hierarchy.

¹ Calderwood; Buchanan; Drummond; Lesley; Pit-scottie.

² Calderwood's *History of the Kirk of Scotland*, vol. i. p. 152; Buchanan, xv. 1.

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